# HORIZON

SUMMER 1969

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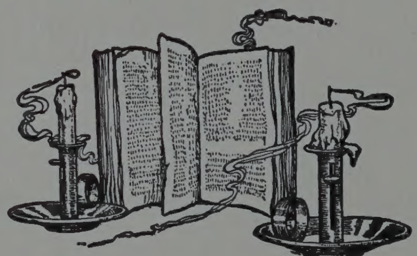

A million candles have burned themselves out. Still I read on.
—Montresor.

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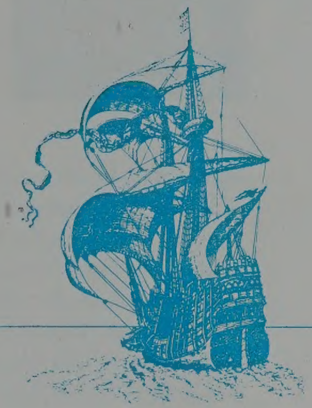

# HORIZON

SUMMER, 1969 · VOLUME XI, NUMBER 3

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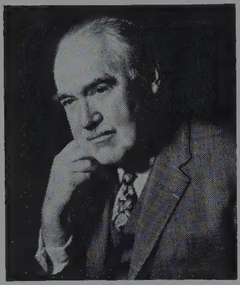
## On the Use of Words



*Morris Bishop*

"Let us guard and praise our lovely language and try to be worthy of her." So writes Morris Bishop in his article on word usage, which begins on page 44 of this issue. Dr. Bishop has long enjoyed a twofold reputation, in the literary world as a writer of light verse, in the academic world as a professor of Romance languages at Cornell and as past president of the Modern Language Association. As readers of HORIZON know, he is a fine prose stylist.

In his article Dr. Bishop writes as a member of the Usage Panel of the AMERICAN HERITAGE *Dictionary of the English Language,* to be published this September as a joint enterprise of the American Heritage Publishing Company and Houghton Mifflin. Readers of HORIZON may be interested to know how this panel came into being.

In 1964, when our company began work on a dictionary, the third edition of the Merriam-Webster International Dictionary had recently been published. In matters of usage, MW-3 proclaimed itself a "descriptive" rather than a "prescriptive" dictionary and seemed to take the general position that "anything goes," as long as someone uses it. This philosophy of permissive lexicography was epitomized for many readers by the statement that "ain't" is "used orally in most parts of the U.S. by many cultivated speakers."

MW-3 represented a triumph for the school of word scholars known as descriptive, or structural, linguists. Their basic doctrine is that language, by its very nature, is a growing, evolving thing that can never be "fixed." New words are coined, old words take on new meanings, and the usage that grates on educated ears today ("Winston tastes good like a cigarette should") will sound all right —or alrite—tomorrow.

So far, so good. Few would quarrel today with that statement of the linguists' position. Indeed Samuel Johnson summed it up in 1755: "the pen must at length comply with the tongue."

The catch lies in the phrase "at length." We do not live at length. We live here and now. At any moment in time there are standards of word usage, just as there are standards of dress and behavior, that command the respect of educated people. A man may choose to say "ain't," to ignore the distinction between "infer" and "imply," to use "irregardless" (regardless of the fact that no such word exists), to employ "finalize" as a verb, Madison-Avenuewise. But if he writes a letter to *The New York Times* in such language, he is likely to suffer the same fate that he would if he wore tennis shoes to the White House or ate peas with his knife at the Plaza.

To say that a dictionary that ignores the prevailing standards of usage is "descriptive" rather

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# HORIZON

A Magazine of the Arts

*SUMMER, 1969 · VOLUME XI, NUMBER 3*

than "prescriptive" is nonsense. If it does not provide information on the way words are used in our own time by good writers and speakers, it is not even being fully descriptive of the living language.

The editors of the AMERICAN HERITAGE *Dictionary* therefore gathered together a panel of about one hundred people whose use of English they especially admired, and to that panel sent questionnaires seeking their precise views of words and phrases in controversy. In each case the results of the voting are reported in the *Dictionary*, not as dicta but as scores, some unanimous or nearly so, some almost evenly divided. In each case readers may accept the majority view or reject it, as some of the panelists obviously do. But they will know what the score is.

Having had some voice in the selection of the Usage Panel, the editors of AMERICAN HERITAGE and HORIZON naturally feel that its hundred members are eminently qualified for their sensitive roles. We resist the temptation to compare them (except in numbers) with the members of the *Académie française* ("The Immortals"), whose official task is to preside over the French language and prepare its dictionary. After 331 years of labor they have only reached the letter *c*.) But we hope that it is not too presumptuous to believe that the members of the Usage Panel may serve a similar purpose in guarding the glories of our own tongue.

J.J.T.

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COVER: Tahiti was never like this—innocent girls, naked, or coy and clothed but ready to romp naked through Eden at a moment's notice. That we may think it once was this way is largely the fault of Paul Gauguin, who sought paradise in the South Seas and, failing to find it, simply created it in his paintings. The two lovely young Tahitian girls on our cover sit quietly off to one side in *Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?*, Gauguin's undoubted masterpiece, which is reproduced in a foldout following page 56. The truth and the myth of the painting are unraveled in an article that begins on page 52. "I believe . . . that I shall never do anything better," Gauguin said of the work. For once, he spoke the naked truth.

RAGHUBIR SINGH—NANCY PALMER AGENCY

# THE CALL OF INDIA

At this very moment thirty thousand young Westerners are on their way across Asia. What are they seeking: spiritual rebirth—desperate poverty—beautiful music—tantric visions—or Mother?

Some day, when they write about the intellectual adventures of modern man, it will be recorded that Americans discovered the hind side of the earth just before they glimpsed the back side of the moon. Of the two, India—though demonstrably closer at hand—remains the more distant star. On the flickering picture screens of our *Weltanschauung* it is easier to make room for a "vast, lonely, forbidding expanse of nothing" than for the vast, crowded, permissive expanse of everything that is the Indian subcontinent—a great repository of philosophies and cultures for which we have suddenly conceived an almost irresistible fascination.

Like so much else about India, this new tropism takes forms that range from the cheerfully absurd to the monumentally sublime. Having passed through the initial, Nehru-jacket phase (which made everybody look like David Belasco), we are now at the bleeding-madras stage, importing Kashmir shawls, carved teakwood chests, and *mridanga* records to the tune of millions of rupees, while gurus from California set up ashrams in upper Connecticut and the psychedelic *garde* explores the mysteries of tantra—the ancient art of switching on the thousand-petaled lotus rooted at the base of a yogi's spine. The first I knew that India had well and truly arrived was when I heard two freckle-faced children of otherwise irreproachably Methodist extraction chanting *Hare Krishna* in unison; they pronounced it "Harry Christma'."

*Drawn by India's spiritual magnetism, an American youth, Terry Miles, sits in mendicant's garb alongside the statue of a bulbous native holy man in New Delhi.*

Meanwhile the voice of the sitar is heard in our land. "Boy have I suffered for this," complained Ravi Shankar on a recent concert tour, surveying the shambles of what had once been a comfortably private domain. "All I want to do now is clear up this mess." Caught unawares, museum directors all over the country are nervously reviewing their Indian inventories and installing new exhibits devoted to "India, the Mother of Civilizations."

I should have thought "Mistress of Civilizations" rather, considering the number of cultures she embraced when they came swooping down on her out of the hills, always patiently exchanging one for the next, so that today you can find statues of the emperor Akbar, Queen Victoria, and Mahatma Gandhi rubbing elbows in the same city park. But "Mother," on second thought, may be the more fitting image for a land where motherhood is such a deeply ingrained habit that anything remotely connected with it—cows, notably—is held in strict veneration and where planned parenthood is making visibly little headway.

Even for the hippies, our knights-errant of the severed umbilical, the arduous overland trek from Turkey to India is like one great going home to mother. "When I got to India I knew I'd come home," a sadhu from Michigan recently told me in Delhi, "so I flung myself naked onto the first

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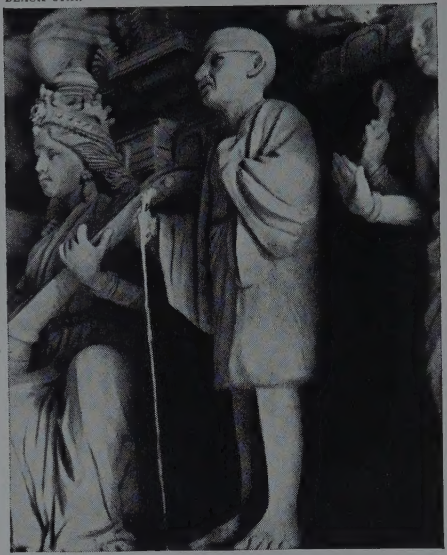
### By FREDERIC V. GRUNFELD

plowed field and kissed the earth." Many of these pilgrims to India, I gather, are young men with similarly unresolved filial impulses that they hope to assuage in this land where even the prime minister is a mother. And it is not a coincidence, surely, that tantra, the *dernier cri* from Soho to Sausalito, is based not only on the lore of the vertebrate lotus but on the worship of ancient earth-goddesses, "the Divine Mothers, who utter loud and tremendous shouts in joy and stir up the very oceans with the mighty wind rising from the magic of their tantra."

The shortest route to tantric visions —which may help explain their current popularity—involves liberal applications of charas, i.e. Indian pot, or the mind-expanding brew known as bhang, which the north Indian sadhus have been teaching the hippies to drink. It has been estimated that thirty thousand hippies are on the roads from Turkey to India and Nepal at any given moment, a migration that begins to take on the dimensions of a modern Children's Crusade. They come for experiences, not just cheap charas, and the Indians have grown quite accustomed to seeing these self-impoverished sahibs in sandals, wandering Kimlike along the dusty roads. Only one thing puzzles local observers. "Their first idea is not to wash, because they think it's part of *sannyàsa* and the holy life," says Mme Krishnamoorthy, who has received hundreds of them at her Delhi ashram. "A real sadhu may put ashes on his head to show that he has renounced this world, but he's never dirty," she continues. "The first thing he must do every day is take a bath; an orthodox Hindu can't pray or eat until he's had a bath."

By way of spiritual ablution hippies tend to do a good deal of reading: *Principles of Tantra* by Arthur Avalon, *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines*, and, most influential of all, *The Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism* by Anagarika Govinda. Lama Govinda, a seventy-year-old German-born monk who describes himself as "an Indian national of European descent and Buddhist faith belonging to a Tibetan order and believing in the brotherhood of man," is the perfect modern model of the Western man who has found peace at the wellsprings of Eastern wisdom. Combining the sense of high adventure of a Halliburton with the pastoral persuasiveness of a Dr. Peale, Lama Govinda proves to be a particularly extrepid implorer when it comes to the doctrine of reincarnation. "Only if we realize that it is in our hands to bridge the chasm of death and to determine and direct the course of our future life in such a way that we can pursue or accomplish in it what we regard as our highest task, then only can we give depth and perspective to our present existence and to our spiritual aspirations," he writes in *The Way of the White Clouds.* "The torn and tortured human being of our time, who knows neither the infinite past, nor the infinity of his future, because he has lost the connection with his timeless being, is like a man suffering from incurable amnesia . . ."

BLACK STAR



*A statue of Gandhi stands in a pantheon of deities in a temple in India, a land where new gods are still being born.*

And then he goes on to tell of his Tibetan guru, a very great yogi, whose body remained erect in a posture of meditation for weeks after his death, so that visitors could hold one-sided conversations with him. This is the sort of psychic phenomenon for which the high Himalaya used to be famous, but Tibet is gone now (see under Thoughts of Chairman Mao), and Sikkim and Bhutan are closed to foreigners because of the tension on the Chinese border. Only the temples of Nepal still offer any scope for the upland school of metaphysics, together with the Tibetan exile monasteries in India, such as the one at Ghoom, above Darjeeling, where one can apply for initiation into the ways of mantra and tantra.

In any event, few Westerners are prepared to go very far in following Lama Govinda's example. Like the Beatles at Rishikesh, they seem to lack the natural aptitude for transcendental meditation, and sitting in the lotus position turns out to be a strain on the nerves as well as the knees. Since God can also be reached through bhakti (devotion) karma (action); and jnana (knowledge), Westerners tend to stray off into less arduous, more permissive forms of Eastern philosophy. Perhaps, after all, the only Indian tradition really suited to the way of the hippie is that of the Bauls, the casteless "madcap" wanderers of Bengal who worship at no shrines, talk of God as "the Man of my heart," and sing of seeking freedom from all compulsions:

> That is why, brother, I became a
> madcap Baul.
> No master I obey, nor injunctions,
> canons, or custom.
> Man-made distinctions have no hold
> on me now.
> I rejoice in the gladness of the love
> that wells out of my own being.
> In love there is no separation, but a
> meeting of hearts forever.
> So I rejoice in song and I dance with
> each and all.
> That is why, brother, I became a
> madcap Baul.

Our newly conceived passion for India, then, is only superficially concerned with the classic disciplines of

Vedanta or Tibetan mysticism. It has more to do, I think, with the great nostalgic quest for our own past that began in the romantic era when the Mediterranean, *das Land wo die Zitronen blühen,* became the cynosure of all eyes. India to us is what Italy was to Shelley, Byron, and Stendhal—a place to recover (or lose) our innocence, where we may solve our most pressing problem of re-entry: the difficulty we all experience of getting a sense of poetry to re-enter our lives.

India's influence on modern Western thought began, in fact, just as the German romantics were taking wing: men like Goethe, Schlegel, and Schopenhauer were profoundly impressed by the first translations of Sanskrit classics, which appeared in the closing years of the eighteenth century. Friedrich and August von Schlegel translated the Bhagavad-Gita into Latin—"the most beautiful, perhaps the only true philosophical song existing in any known tongue," Wilhelm von Humboldt called it—and thereby launched the ardent *Drang nach Indien* that culminates in the writings of Hesse and Jung and even extends to some of Brecht's work.

Romantic poets like Thomas Moore were attracted to Indian subjects for the same reason that composers like Léo Delibes wrote operas around them; it was all very strange, exotic, and pentatonic. The literary turning point is represented by Kipling, half realist, half mythmaker, who was the first to give us an inkling of why this land is so passionately loved by Englishman and Indian alike. We have had a long string of anti-Kiplings since then—Forster, Koestler, Malraux—and the passage to India sometimes seems almost obligatory as a venture in literary self-exploration. But I wonder if any of the intellectuals has succeeded as well as Kipling in giving the world a sense of the landscape, as opposed to the ideas, of India.

It is still very much a romantic landscape, suitable for poets of any persuasion. Hills in Rajasthan shaped like champagne glasses, with camels moving through them as half-seen shadows; wisps of smoke rising from pyres into the hazy air above the Ganges; pure white sand and deadly blue water off the shark beaches at Madras; lunar fissures in the dark earth when the monsoon recedes, leaving the ground parched for another year; green shoots sprouting in silver water in the rice paddies; pale rows of birches on beige terraces beside the Shalimar Gardens in winter; and the summer flowers of saris—yellow and red, the poorer the women, the brighter the colors—strewn through the cornfields.

RODERICK CAMERON

*A sensuously embracing couple adorns an ancient Indian temple whose cultists looked on eroticism as a road to truth.*

But often the poverty obscures the view. If you come here well fed, you must be prepared to face the embarrassing questions of no man being an island and of your own commitment to the conventional warm feelings with which you approach the Hundred Neediest Cases at Christmastime. The first things you notice in India, even if your ideas of population density have been acquired on the Sixth Avenue subway, are the vast numbers of people and the staggering proportion that is visibly, desperately, poor. Only later do you become aware that no one does anything about it. In the market places and on corners where foreign tourists congregate the neediest are prominently on display: amputees, cripples, lunatics, emaciated babies, lepers, children with faces so eaten away by congenital syphilis that you can see into their sinus cavities—what would Emma Lazarus have made of this lot? Charity and compassion, of course, are also virtues in the Hindu and Buddhist canon—"Be self-controlled; be charitable; be compassionate," say the Upanishads—but the poverty of Indian cities is so patently beyond remedy that the government is powerless to supply even rudimentary solutions like soup kitchens or shelters for the homeless.

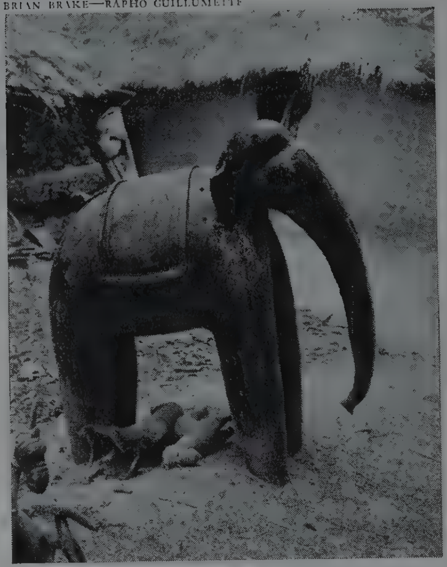
By cutting off almost all possible avenues of escape, the caste system doesn't help matters. It is a system that probably originated as an apartheid policy imposed by the light-skinned Indo-Aryans on the dark-skinned peoples they had conquered. Describing the four basic castes, an early Sanskrit text asserts that "Brahmans [priests] are fair, Kshatriyas [warriors] are reddish, Vaisyas [traders] are yellowish and the Sudras [laborers] are black." Though these racial divisions have largely disappeared and outcaste "untouchables" now enjoy preferential status under the law, caste is far from dead in India. Politics are thoroughly caste-ridden, menial jobs are still assigned on the basis of caste, and marriages—the focal point of Indian social life—are decided by caste considerations. The newspapers are full of matrimonial advertisements of like seeking like. "Wanted," reads a typical announcement in the Hindustan *Times*: "accomplished, handsome virgin for brilliant Uttar Pradesh Brahman surgeon, 31. Emoluments three figures." Or again: "Wanted, a beautiful Punjabi Brahman girl from a well-connected family age up to 21 years, for a handsome, well-educated and well-connected young man of 27 years, established in business." They specify well-connected because there are also plenty of desperately poor

Brahmans; poverty is no respecter of caste.

Indian Marxists argue convincingly that the whole Hindu doctrine of inaction, rather than the economy per se, is to blame for the nation's troubles. Certainly the two foundation stones of Hinduism, dharma and karma, both lay stress on submission rather than struggle. Dharma demands that each man perform the duty that attaches to his station in life: "Greater is thine own work, even if this be humble, than the work of another, even if this be great," says the Bhagavad-Gita. The theory of karma holds that each soul is reborn in accordance with the merits or demerits it has earned in a previous life, and only the perfected soul is released from the wheel of continual births and deaths. Together, by making a virtue of necessity, they operate as the classical Marxian opiate against reality: where there are no earthly rewards to be had anyway, one may as well practice renunciation. "For the man who casts off all desires and walks without desire, with no thought of a Mine, and of an I, comes unto peace. This is the state of abiding in Brahma . . ."

The metaphysics of the Gita, however, are not really a reliable guide to India, whatever Max Mueller or Christopher Isherwood may have led us to believe. The real genius of India consists not in renouncing the world but in making the most of it. The more closely you look at India, the more it emerges as a profoundly, ingeniously materialist culture in the best sense of the word. "You have been taught to expect the wrong things from us," I was told by Dr. Niharranjan Ray, the brilliant cultural historian who is head of the Institute of Advanced Studies in Simla. "Don't look at our temples as expressions of a lofty spirituality. Look at them as problems of engineering!"

BRIAN BRAKE—RAPHO GUILLUMETTE



*A fine piece of folk sculpture, this somber wooden elephant stands outside a hut in the Bakura district of west Bengal.*

They don't seem terribly spiritual at that. Some of India's best-known temples are ornamented with tier after tier of the erotic sculptures that used to be known to art criticism as "plastic obscenities." With almost clinical precision they depict incredibly acrobatic men and women in a hundred ingenious variations on the dance of life, some of them so complicated that it takes a knowledge of Yoga and the assistance of two side-girls to bring them off. Both Khajuraho and Konarak—the Chartres and Reims of India—are relics of that great epoch between the seventh and thirteenth centuries when tantrism and sex worship were at the height of their power. The temple sculptures illustrate the tantric belief that the world is a playground (*lilakshetra*) for blissful sensualists; from what we know of their cult, it centered on a sacred feast beginning with *madya* (liquor), *mamsa* (meat), *matsya* (fish), and *mudra* (corn), capped by the fifth and most essential of the "m" elements, *maithuna* (sexual intercourse). The shore temple at Konarak, though dedicated to the sun-god Surya, devotes its finest panels to a detailed catalogue of the varieties of *maithuna* experience. Khajuraho, in the center of India, is celebrated for its hundreds of sculptured girls with "their rounded, pitcherlike breasts," as the ancient scriptures describe them. The male figures shown with them in various improbable poses are said to represent kings in the act of becoming gods through ritual intercourse with a surrogate earth-goddess. Architecturally these temples are sumptuous, baroque, and slightly decadent, rather like Venice along the Grand Canal, expressive of an Establishment sensuality in which even sex became an organized curricular activity.

Beyond the temples and the Taj Mahal lies an unsuspected world of far more humble but no less vital Indian art that reaches back to the dawn of Asian history. Here are the primitive pieces that India's peasants have always produced for themselves instead of for their rulers, an art as lean and purposeful as the hands that made it. Aesthetically it comes like a cold shower after a warm bath compared with the expensive art of the Mogul courts. Dolls have faces like African Bakongo figures, embroidered coverlets resemble the Tassili rock drawings of North Africa, and there are tribal masks that might have been carved by Eskimos. Every line goes straight to the point. A typical painting from Bihar reduces the face of a woman to a quizzical triangle surmounted by a single eyebrow and one unblinking eye. A terra-cotta toy modeled in five or six quick squeezes has the air of a Picasso figure.

The visual impact of this art is compounded by subtle appeals to the other senses—the sound of flutes on the riverbank, the smell of incense mingled with charas and cow dung, the textures of hand-spun cotton and handmade brick, or the taste of bhang under a banyan tree. Eighty per cent of India's 535 million still live in villages—villages with names that nobody seems to know (detailed maps are unavailable in India) and that will never appear in any guidebook, since they consist only of mud-walled houses and rarely contain so much as a single permanent building of architectural distinction. And yet this cluster of one-story adobe huts is in itself a work of art. The houses are tiny but beautifully organized, usually with a porch, a barn, and a granary grouped around a courtyard. There is not a hard edge anywhere; the walls melt a little with each monsoon and are lovingly patted back into Brancusi shapes by the women of the village.

Unlike the wretched, squalid huts in city slums, the village houses are kept so immaculate that you can eat off the floor in any of them. Usually several families share a central courtyard, and each complex of houses interlocks with the next in some ingenious way. Seen from the air, the whole village forms an organic maze that would delight the designers of Habitat 67.

Each house has an art gallery on its doorstep. When marriages are to be celebrated, seeds to be sown, or crops to be harvested, the women paint auspicious (and unbeknownst to them, tantric) symbols on the hard-packed ground of their courtyard, using a sort of whitewash made of rice powder. Sometimes they add red and white paintings to the walls: Lord Krishna and the cow-girls or the loves of Rama and Sita. Only the women paint, just as only the men do bronze sculpture, casting magnificent men and horses by the ancient lost-wax process. Horses by village sculptors are among India's great masterpieces of primitive art—spirits of ancestors riding animals of majesty, the bearers of gods. Some have been caught on the run, all four legs outstretched, mane flying. Others are rooted monumentally to the ground on legs as thick as elephants', but molded around a solid mud core with scores of tiny wax strands (known technically as "wax wires") that form playful whorls and wave patterns along the horses' flanks. There is an ease in the handling of the material, a sense of lightness and joy, that no Western sculptor in bronze has ever managed to bring off.

Since mud houses leave few archaeological traces, no one knows how long the villages have been like this, turning out their annual production of paintings and sculpture. It seems fairly certain that the essential features of this scene have not changed since about 3000 B.C., when the first cities appeared in the Indus valley. The ruins of these cities, Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa, suggest that the great Indian juggernaut had picked up its cultural momentum even before the Indo-Aryan invasion at the beginning of the second millennium B.C., which marked the beginning of its written history. The people of Mohenjo-Daro wove the same homespun cotton *khadi* as Mahatma Gandhi; they wore the same earrings, nose studs, and bangles as the village people of today, used the same tools and toys, worshiped some of the same mother-goddesses and phallic images, and threw away quantities of the same sort of disposable clay cups—presumably because the Hindu taboo against drinking twice from the same cup was already in force.

ELIOT ELISOFON

*Jagannath, Lord of the World, becomes a tangible force when devotees put him in a cart and drag him down crowded streets.*

The civilization of ancient Egypt possessed a continuity such as this, but it was interrupted by the Greeks and severed altogether by the sword of Islam. India, on the other hand, has sometimes wavered but never really swerved from the straight course of cultural identity. The theme of her epic is that man prevails and goes on prevailing, by tolerance, if possible, or by passive persistence. To preserve its own way the village has had to pursue a policy of ruthless submission to warriors, priests, landlords, and whoever else has appeared in the guise of authority: Aryans, Greeks, Scythians, Huns, Arabs, Turks, Moguls, Englishmen. As a result India is a Babel of languages, some of them totally unrelated, with each state and often each district jealously guarding its own.

The Hindu pantheon, too, contains an immense array of deities, some of them sprung fully clad from native soil and others brought by the invaders. The devout Hindu may address his prayers to any of the classic divinities presided over by Brahma the Creator, Shiva the Destroyer, and Vishnu the Preserver—with their several avatars, or incarnations, notably Rama and Krishna—whose images in stone and brass are everywhere. But there are also thousands of local gods and totems, some of them represented by no more than a tree, a stone, or a sheaf of straw. The existence of such idols used to be cited by missionaries as proof of the depths of superstition to which India had sunk. It was left for Gandhi to put the matter in perspective. "I do not disbelieve in idol worship," he explained. "Images are an aid to worship. No Hindu considers an image to be God . . . An idol worshiper sees God even in a stone and, therefore, takes the help of an idol to establish his union with God." As for tree worship, "I find in it a thing instinct with a deep pathos and poetic beauty. It symbolizes true reverence for the entire vegetable kingdom which, with its endless panorama of beautiful shapes and forms, declares to us, as it were, with a million tongues the greatness of the glory of God."

Historically, Hinduism has always survived by its very willingness to compromise and assimilate. It countered a Buddhist reformation by quietly converting the historical figure of Buddha into the ninth incarnation of Vishnu—rather like turning Martin Luther into a Catholic saint. Gandhi himself, I suspect, is well on his way to becoming yet another avatar of Vishnu; was there ever a likelier candidate for sainthood, or one who falls more naturally within the great tradition? Already some of the peasants pray to the photograph of the fragile old man with steel-rimmed glasses that hangs on their adobe walls, and to the rather forlorn life-sized statues of him that have been erected in the towns (opposite the railway station, usually), where people can stop and hang garlands of flowers around his neck. I can think of no better example of India's marvelous gift for synthesis, for following the sinuous curved line that describes the shortest distance between past and future.

This awesome sense of continuity finds expression in the sound of Indian music whenever the sitar, the tamboura, and the tabla drums take up their endless midnight conversations. To our Western ears this is the newest and most influential sound on the musical scene ("It has been a preponderant influence on the way I write music," says Leonard Bernstein); in its native country it is barely holding its own against the onrush of film music that manages to combine the worst of both worlds. Where it survives, however, authentic Indian music is demonstrably one of the most ancient arts in the world. Sanskrit religious classics are chanted today just as they were three thousand years ago; singers at banquets assume the same working posture—body bent slightly forward, one hand cupped behind the ear—that is depicted on the tombs at Thebes. In some parts of the country you can find instruments that, like coelacanths, are the missing links of musical evolution: the one-string ektara, for example, ur-ancestor of all stringed instruments; or the high-curving Roman bucina, still trumpeting lustily in the forests of Kerala.

Although several forms of musical notation have been devised, no one has ever come up with a satisfactory way of putting Indian music on paper. The core of this music has been passed from teacher to pupil in the great chain of aural tradition known as *guruparampara;* some of it seems to have come down to us through a thousand intermediaries, a rumor started by Adam. There are no Indian Vivaldis whose works lie on a shelf for two hundred years before being revived. Whatever is not kept alive is simply lost forever.

The focus of this art, of course, is the melody—the long red thread of melody that the performer spins out extempore but in accordance with strict laws of tradition. The melody moves up and down by small, quick, sliding movements from one tone to the next. In classical—which is to say, aristocratic—music, everything rests on the framework of the raga, the scale-pattern, or "tone row," that provides the point of departure for the performer's improvisation. A sitar player of the old school can spend a whole evening exploring the melodic and rhythmic possibilities of a single five-tone raga (shades of Arnold Schoenberg!). During the Middle Ages certain ragas became associated with specific states of mind or times of day or year: there are ragas for "early morning, tender and amorous," or "second part of the night, deep happiness and passion," or for "the rainy season, commanding and happy." These intriguing conceits were elaborated by poets and court painters, who depicted the various love scenes appropriate to each raga; the key to this music, it seems, was sex, which may help to explain its current popularity in the West.

What gives Indian music its peculiar fascination, however, is not so much the pattern of any given melody (I defy you to tell an evening raga from a morning raga without using a scorecard) as it is the fact that virtually every melody is accompanied by some sort of drone, which is usually twanged on a tamboura—a long-drawn-out, constantly reiterated "reference tone." Listening to the melody floating out above it, we are scarcely conscious of the perpetual whirring and jangling of the drone. But our subconscious is very much involved with it: how far is the melody from the reference note? As the interval keeps contracting and expanding, we seem to be mentally squeezed or expanded with it.

Nor is it necessary that the melody be either classical or elaborate. The most exciting Indian music I know is the sacred conch-shell music played as a one-man duet by a half-blind temple musician in Orissa. The thing is phenomenal. He places two ancient conch shells to his lips, one at each corner of his mouth, and proceeds to blow. At first it sounds as though both were pitched to the same note, and one plays continuously as a drone while the other develops a fast rhythmic pattern almost—not quite—in unison. But it soon appears that by blowing harder on the melody conch he can raise its pitch a quarter or a half tone, or achieve various fine shadings in between. With just these two elements, a steady drone on D and a melody hovering nervously, rhythmically, between D and D-sharp, he launches on a long and complex improvisation that sends your mind's ear spinning off into the magical convolutions of a tantra pattern. Where else in the world could you expect to hear a masterpiece composed on one-and-a-half notes? It is a matter, again, of making the most of what one has, however limited the resources. You must come to India for the experience—the long onward-rolling drone that is the bass note of history, the mantra of the monks, the sea breaking against the shore of Kanniyakumari.

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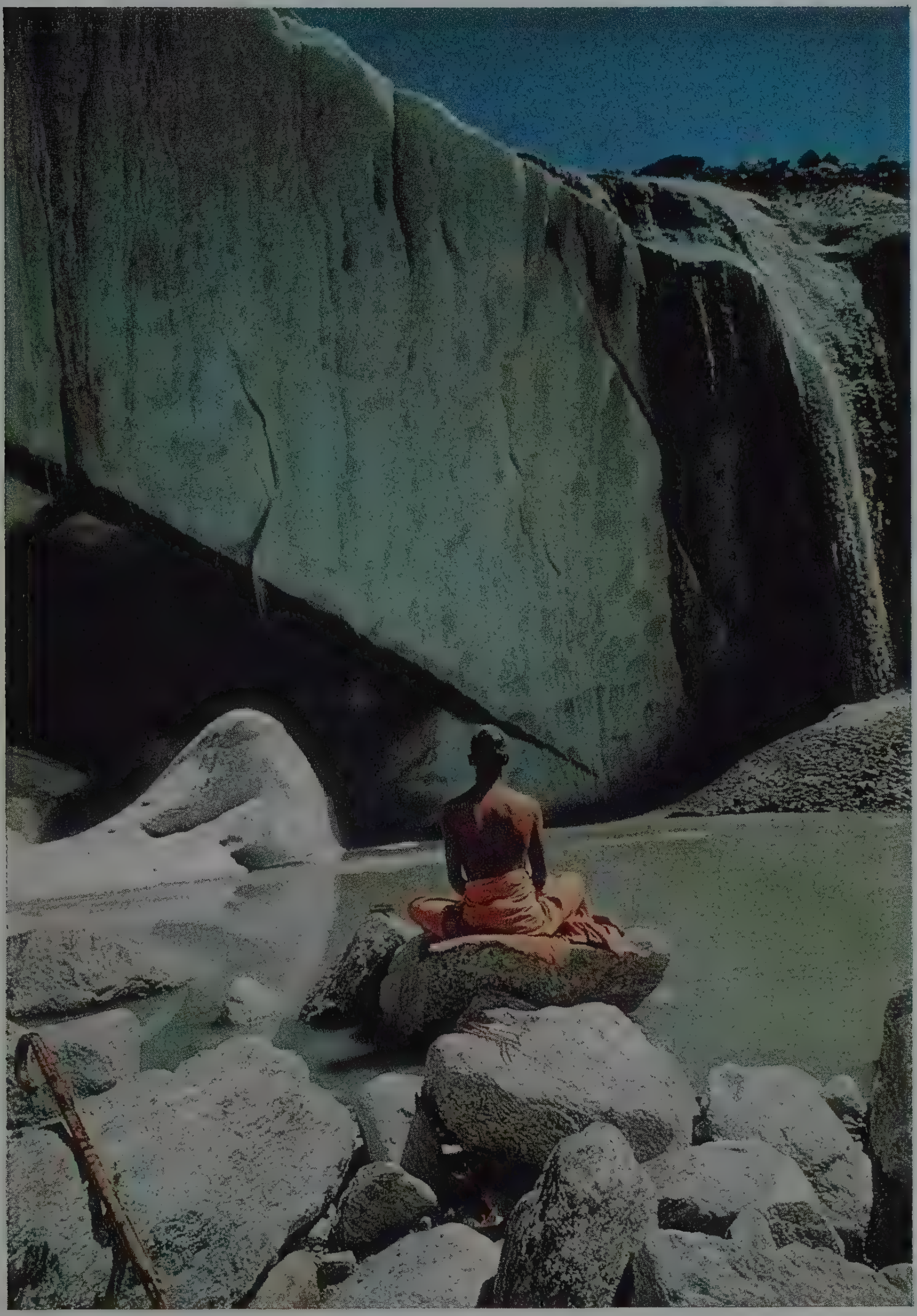
*Frederic V. Grunfeld, a regular contributor to* HORIZON, *spent the winter in India photographing primitive art and recording the music of tantra.*

# The Sacred Ganges

## A Picture Portfolio



A divinity to Hindu believers, the Ganges winds its way fifteen hundred miles across the north Indian plain to the Bay of Bengal. At its source, high in the Himalaya, it leaps from the face of a glacier to form the pool of icy water above, where a sadhu sits in contemplation. As it nears the sea, it becomes a broad majestical stream. Wherever it passes, it is the object of devotion, for the Ganges is sacred throughout its long course. On the following pages that course is traced in eloquent pictures taken over the past several years by a young Indian photographer.

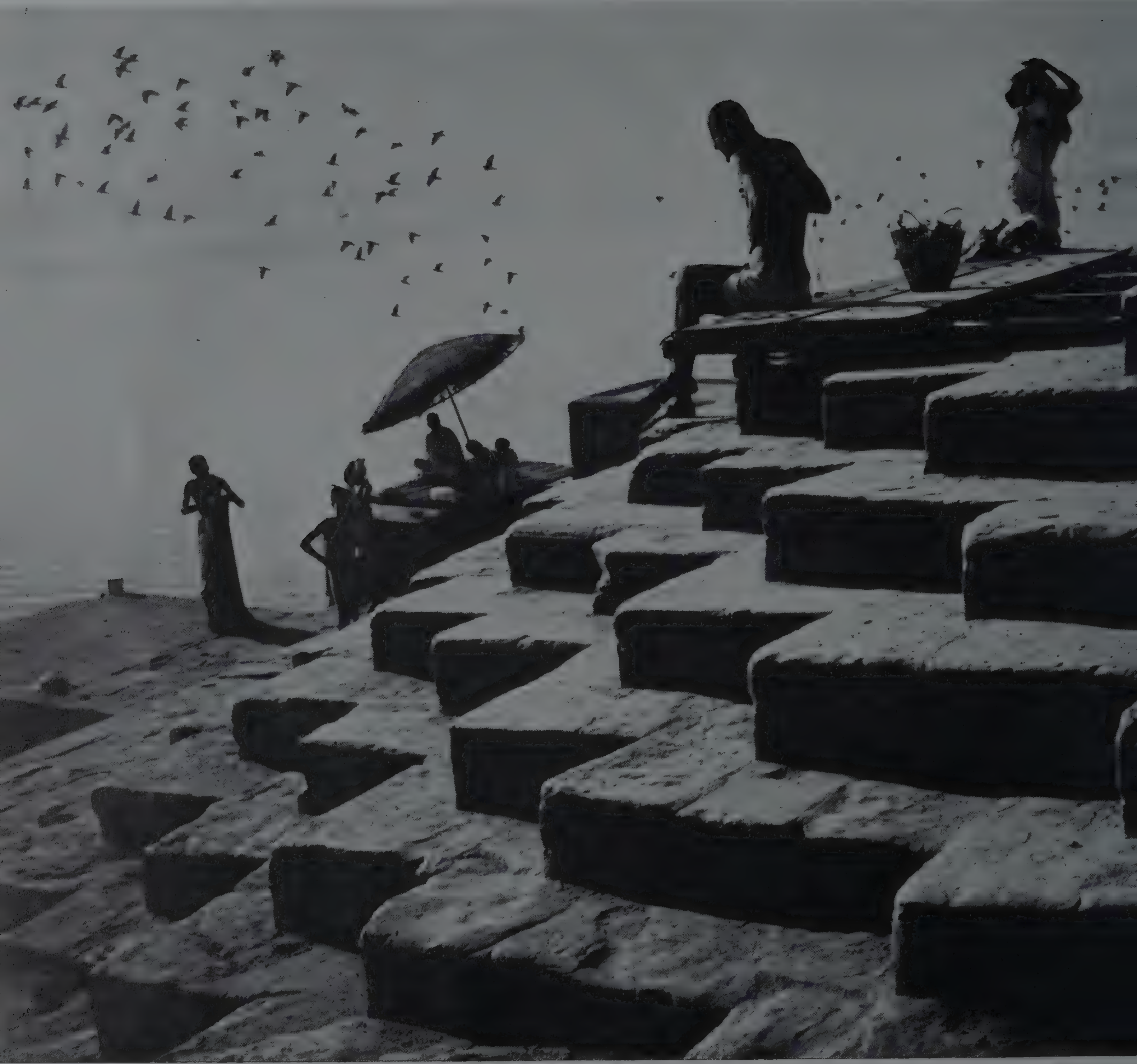
Photographed for Horizon by Raghubir Singh

At the foot of peaks that rise to 23,000 feet, opposite, the milky little Ganges begins its run through a rock-strewn valley. To bathe at the glacial source is an act of devotion that brings the pilgrim absolution for his sins. But reaching that point means an arduous trip, since the glacier lies thirty miles beyond the last bus stop. At right, a wealthy pilgrim eases the rigors of his pilgrimage by paying a porter to carry him. Below, a group of holy men oil their bodies and bedaub themselves with saffron after immersing themselves in the pool beside the glacial crevice known to Hindus as the "Cow's Mouth."

PHOTOGRAPHS RAGHUBIR SINGH—NANCY PALMER AGENC

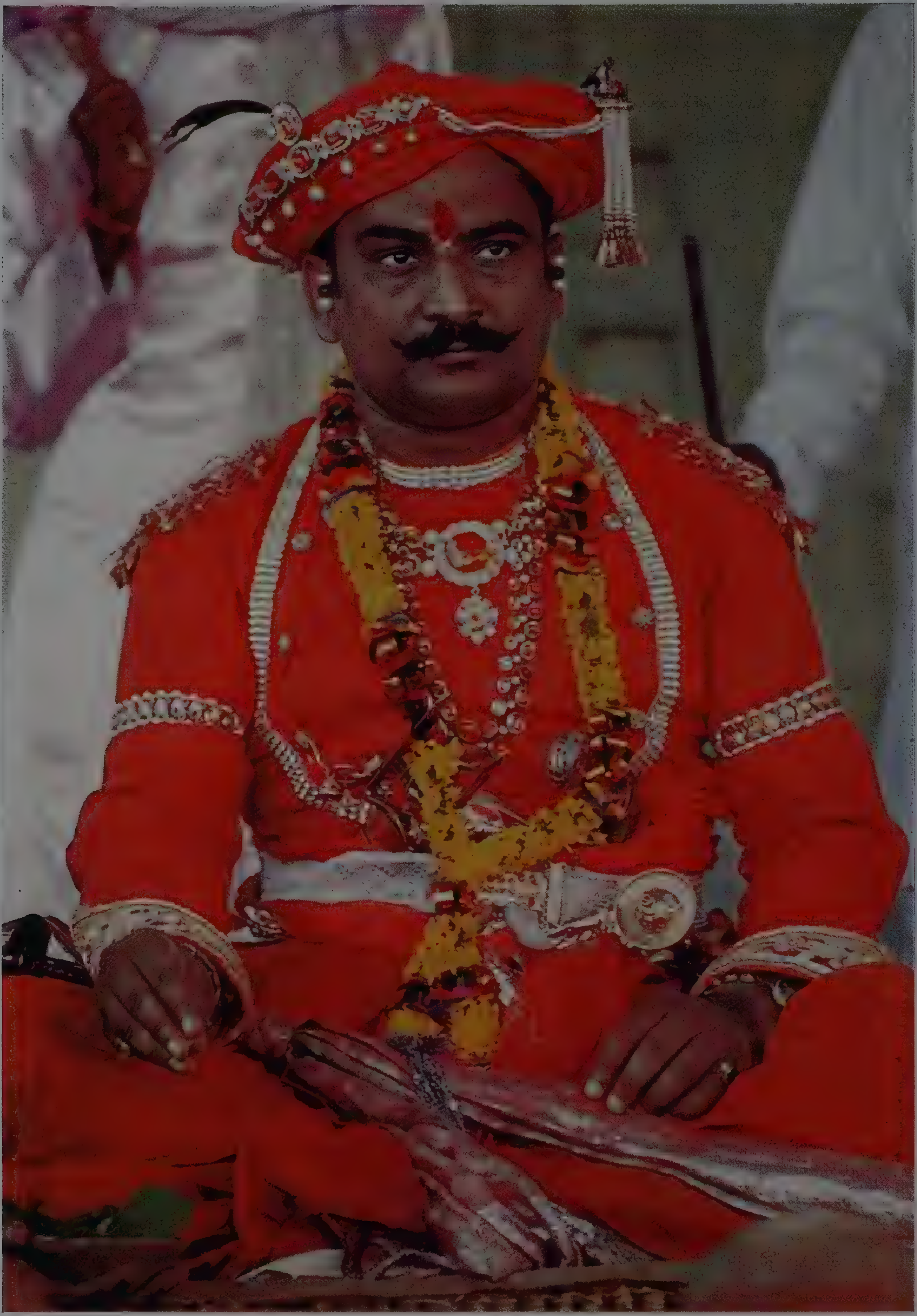
An adept at Yoga, above, holds the pose called the "king of dancers" on a hill overlooking the Ganges. Opposite, twelve miles from its source, the river cascades over white, glacier-gouged rocks upon which two holy men perch in stony detachment.

OVERLEAF: Hundreds of thousands of worshipers flock to the Ganges at Allahabad for an annual festival. Here the brown Ganges is joined by the blue Jumna. At Allahabad, in 1954, some five hundred Hindus were trampled to death at the special Kumbh Mela celebration, which is held every twelve years.



Above, bathers use the pitted stone steps, or ghats, leading down to the Ganges at Benares, a holy city given over almost entirely to Hindu worship. Opposite, by early morning light brilliantly clad women at Benares bathe in the river whose sacred waters are believed once to have flowed in heaven.

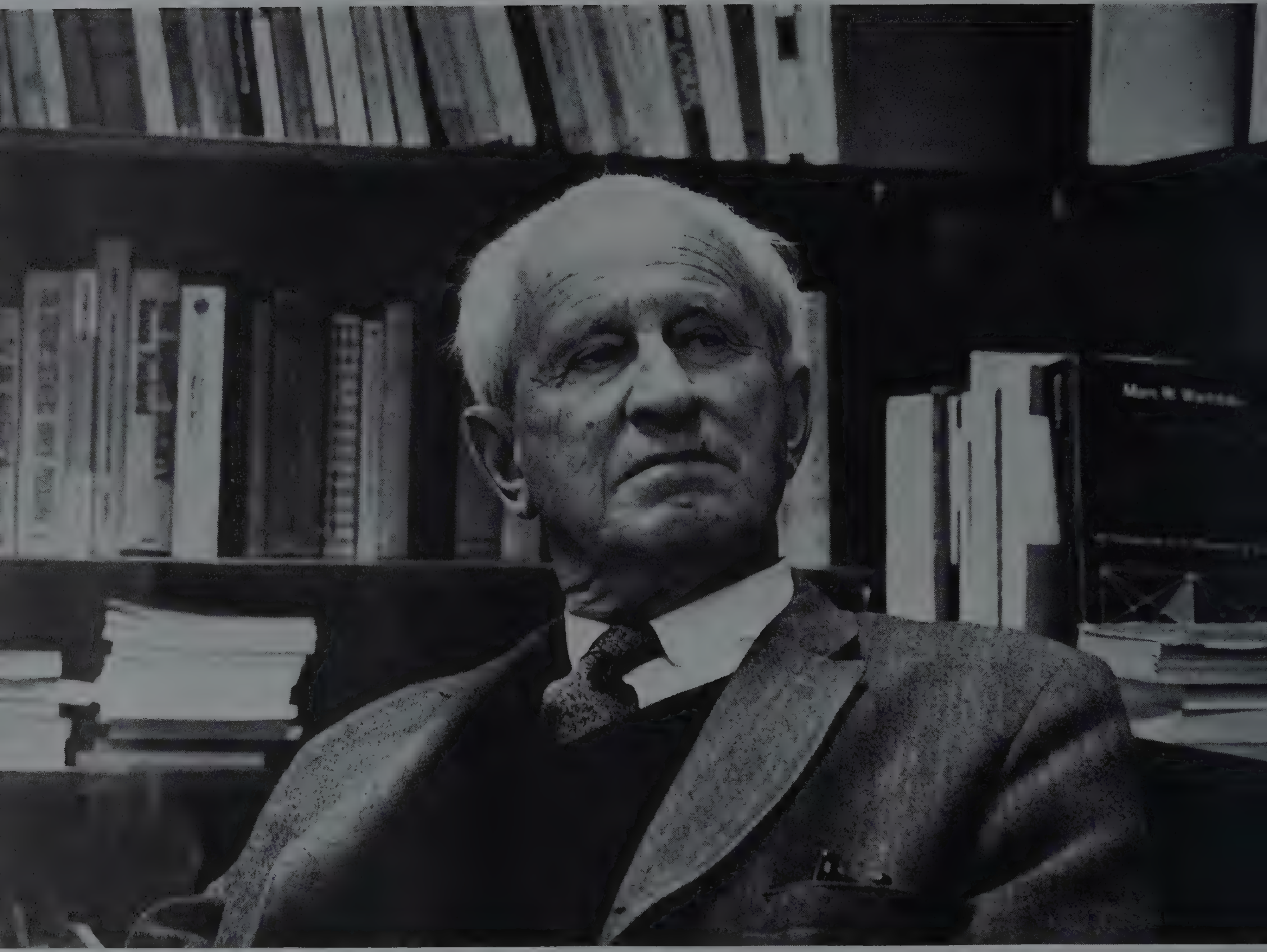
OVERLEAF: The shrouded bodies of Hindus rest on the steps of a burning-ghat at Benares, where the dead are cremated. The red shroud indicates that the deceased is a woman whose husband survives her. After cremation the ashes will be strewn upon the river in a rite that will revive the souls of the dead to start a new cycle of regeneration.



The Maharajah of Benares, above, sits clothed in majestic raiment; although his political power is virtually nil, his religious influence is vast. Opposite, a father kneels in the Ganges at Benares to teach his young son how to hold his hands in prayer.

OVERLEAF: Sleepy-eyed sacred cows loll by the lower Ganges in the province of Bihar. An island temple rises above the river as it flows to its ultimate destination, the teeming port of Calcutta and the waiting sea.

DOMINIC CAPEZZA—BLACK ST



# MARCUSE

The prophet of the New Left,
our era's prime advocate of violence,
is here assassinated

*By* EDMUND STILLMAN

One night last autumn a band of students from the University of California—long hair, bell-bottoms, fanciful shirts, love beads, the whole bit—ringed a modest house in suburban San Diego through the hours of darkness. They were there to guard a little white-haired man of seventy years against a death threat by a Bircher, a minuteman, or some other right-wing California nut—a parody of the last days of Leon Trotsky in exile, hounded by Stalin's NKVD, played out in an atmosphere of pop terror that might just possibly have turned out to prove real, the America of the sixties being what it is.

The unlikely target of the death threat was no underground conspirator, no unfrocked general of revolutionary armies, no rival for power to a mad dictator half a world away. The little man whose fitful slumbers the students guarded was Herbert Marcuse, a genial, elderly academic whose specialty is Hegel and the more lugubrious nineteenth-century German philosophers and who in his spare time drafts books—manifestoes—that have quickly become the ideological rallying point of the New Left revolution now sweeping an affluent and bored Western world.

The manifestoes are heady stuff, for if they are to be taken literally, they are an exhortation to mass violence against the conciliators—against the whole structure of parliamentary democracy and what Marcuse regards as the sham humanity of the welfare state —and against the whole notion of instinctual, chiefly sexual restraint as the foundation of civilized society.

Since Marcuse has, so far as is known, never done personal violence to anyone in his life, and since he seems to have practiced an admirable social restraint as devoted husband and father, it is not certain that he means his doctrines to be taken literally. But they have so been. In Paris a year ago last May the students rioted under banners proclaiming "*Mao, Marx, et Marcuse!*" In West Berlin he lectures to throngs led by Red Rudi Dutschke and other *enragés* who assault the structure of self-complacent West German society.

Marcuse in his interviews has, rather surprisingly, excepted the university as a fit arena for violent confrontation, but his doctrines, literally applied, helped to spark the student upheaval at Columbia University last spring and on campuses across the country since. For, as one of his disciples in *Ramparts* magazine has put it: "In the larger sphere of things, resistance, disruption, subversion of the existing order and even violence are justified . . . because they break the chain of ordered repression and create more space in the society for genuine consideration of rational alternatives." Another disciple, the New Left Harvard sociologist Martin Peretz, puts it this way: "Tolerance [according to Marcuse], as practiced in liberal society, is tolerance of all who play by the rules of the game. It is also tolerance of the game itself, although the game's rules exclude the wretched and hungry, although in fact the rules are precisely what sustain their wretchedness and hunger. . . . the landless and the indentured, the hopeless and the damned have violence done to them all their lives . . . And when they take to arms in revolt against the conditions of their existence, it is perhaps in furious revenge but as well to break the cycle of violence that has oppressed them. . . . And so Marcuse implores tolerance for such revolutionary violence, asking us not to equate the violence of the oppressed with that of the oppressor."

Thus, in personal terms, Herbert Marcuse the social philosopher may be an enigma. But as an advocate of liberating social action against the living hell he contends advanced industrial civilization has made for "One-Dimensional Man," by his fruits shall ye know him. Indeed, the personal antipathy that Marcuse apparently feels for violence and sexual license, in contrast with his literally interpreted doctrines, might be considered to give evidence of that very separation of thought from feeling, of language from intention, that he contends is the mark of modern alienated man.

In thought Marcuse is an eclectic—the prophet of a not wholly reconciled system that seeks to unite Hegelian idealism, the early visionary Marx, and, paradoxically again, the doctrines of that profound social pessimist, Sigmund Freud. Of the three strands in Marcuse's thinking, the Hegelian is likely to hold the least attraction for his disciples today. Marcuse's early book *Reason and Revolution*, a study of Hegel and his transformation at the hands of Feuerbach, Marx, and other, lesser figures like Lorenz von Stein, has, to his publisher's delight, gone to seven printings. But it is hard to believe that the kids who bought up every copy of his book in Greenwich Village early last December for Christmas giving can have made much of it. Most of the world today, those who swing and those who don't, can do without the notion of a purposeful quasi-divine history as a driving force of social transformation and are hardly likely to accept the notion that the rhythm of that history is truly dialectical. When Marcuse writes of Hegel, it is easy to suppose that the Love Generation's eyes glaze: "Hegel's philosophy is indeed what the subsequent reaction termed it, a negative philosophy. It is originally motivated by the conviction that the given facts that appear to common sense as the positive index of truth are in reality the negation of truth, so that truth can only be established by their destruction. The driving force of the dialectical method lies in this critical conviction. Dialectic in its entirety is linked to the conception that all forms of being are permeated by an essential negativity, and that this negativity determines their content and movement. The dialectic represents the counterthrust to any form of positivism."

*Reason and Revolution,* like Sir Thomas Browne's dissertation on *Urn Burial* for an earlier generation, is surely one of the great unread best sellers of all time.

The real core of Marcuse's politically oriented, or proselytizing, work is Marxian and to a lesser degree Freudian in its derivation—but Marcuse is no classical Marxist and no classical Freudian either. His central message consists in a short book, *One-Dimensional Man* (1964); the concluding chapters of another book, *Eros and Civilization* (1955); a brief essay, "Repressive Tolerance," in a third, *A Critique of Pure Tolerance,* published in 1965 with two disciples; and most recently (1969) a short tract, ninety-one pages in all, entitled *An Essay on Liberation.*

Marcuse is not a prolific writer: his only other major work is a study of the Soviet Union whose burden may fairly be summarized as stating that authoritarian Soviet society is "no better" than the democratic totalitarianism of the so-called free West.

The argument of *One-Dimensional Man* is simply that the society we see around us—a middle-class, egalitarian, ostensibly humane society that provides political freedoms, ample wages, and extensive leisure time in the midst of rational technological innovation—is a pious fraud. The egalitarianism is the totalitarian egalitarianism of the middle, maintained by the savage repression of those groups marginal to advanced industrial society in its supposedly democratic, yet fundamentally deadly form. The vaunted rationality is at bottom unreason, since the society resists innovations such as automation that would inevitably free man from the necessity of enduring degrading labor and so demand the transformation of society itself. And the rationality is unreason because, above all, the ostensibly rational economy that provides such ample wages does so by preparing for the ultimate idiocy—nuclear war.

The social humanity of the society is likewise a fraud, as are our beloved constitutional liberties, which extend tolerance only to those movements and arguments that do not fundamentally challenge the *status quo.* The very affluence that the society extends to most of its members—always remembering the wretched and the damned, such as the blacks, the Indians, and the despairing white rural poor, who are excluded—is a deadening drug that keeps the all too willing victims in docility, forever barring them from achieving what man could truly be.

As Marcuse says in *One-Dimensional Man:* "The distinguishing feature of advanced industrial society is its effective suffocation of those needs which demand liberation—liberation from that which is tolerable and rewarding and comfortable—while it sustains and absolves the destructive power and repressive function of the affluent society. . . . If the worker and his boss enjoy the same television program and visit the same resort places, if the typist is as attractively made up as the daughter of her employer, if the Negro owns a Cadillac, if they all read the same newspaper, then this assimilation indicates not the disappearance of classes, but the extent to which the needs and satisfactions that serve the preservation of the Establishment are shared by the underlying population."

The hell of the situation, says Marcuse, is that the ostensibly permissive but actually fundamentally repressive society so smothers dissent that alternative visions of social order are hidden from us, or cannot even be conceived of by imaginations distorted and damaged by a lifetime of hidden repression. "According to a dialectical proposition," he writes in his essay "Repressive Tolerance," "it is the whole which determines the truth . . . in the sense that its structure and function determine every particular condition and relation. Thus, within a repressive society, even progressive movements threaten to turn into their opposite to the degree to which they accept the rules of the game. To take a most controversial case: the exercise of political rights (such as voting, letter writing to the press, to Senators, etc., protest demonstrations with an a priori renunciation of counterviolence) in a society of total administration serves to strengthen this administration by testifying to the existence of democratic liberties. . . . In such a case, freedom (of opinion, of assembly, of speech) becomes an instrument for absolving servitude."

Thus every reformer—indeed every individual in the society, however radical he may think himself to be—is endangered each day of his life. In a kind of secular transcript of Calvinism, Marcuse holds that the radical, pure in his intentions, may yet lose grace through temptation, being "co-opted" into a society that engulfs opposition, disarming it by asserting that man, and the rebel, are free.

For Marcuse, the damping down of dissent by the repressive society is not achieved by the machinations of a conspiratorial ruling class, or Establishment, so much as by the automatic actions of a social machine that is self-directing and self-preserving. Here Marcuse accepts the Marxian notion of the false consciousness: the liberal Establishmentarian may not even be aware of the function of what he does as he tolerantly allows the campus radical to challenge Vietnam or genially sits down to dinner with the labor-union executive (who is himself by now a prop of the established order, a respectable man) in a would-be feast of reason.

The operations of society, automatic but marvelous in their completeness and intricacy, extend throughout the totality of existence: they flatten human life, close off alternatives, corrupt the language, constrict philosophy, hinder technology, repressing not merely social discord but human sensibility, until the end product is there—One-Dimensional Man.

The kind of society that produces this dismal effect, posits Marcuse, is after all a *totalitarian* society in the literal sense of the term. Soviet Communism, he asserts, accomplishes the same ends, closing off dissent and the vision of alternatives, within *its* system of authoritarian totalitarianism. But we need not pride ourselves on our difference. Western society, in its own way, is as repressive as Soviet dictatorship—and when its existence is threatened by true dissent, for all our constitutionalism it is as savage in its repressive acts. Both societies, if put to the test, will strike out and kill the dissenting. Only the outer forms are different—the inner reality, East and West, is essentially the same.

Marcuse, in any case, would not seem to be sentimentally addicted to the forms or substance of democracy as practiced in the modern world. For the Afro-Asian nations, seeking to develop the technology of advanced industrialism, his prescription may well be the dictatorial rule of technologically ambitious but personally self-denying elites. The effort to maintain the façade of constitutionalism—a fraud in any event—may keep Afro-Asia from the real business at hand. Arguing for "educational dictatorship," he asserts that "society must first create the material prerequisites of freedom for all its citizens before it can be a free society; it must first *create* the wealth before being able to *distribute* it. . . . It must first enable its slaves to learn to see and think before they know what is going on and what they themselves can do to change it. And, to the degree to which the slaves have been preconditioned to exist as slaves and to be content with that role, their liberation necessarily appears to come from without and from above."

In the same way, arguing for a radical transformation of Western society, he is uncompromising in his view of shared freedoms. There is a need, he says, for "a discriminative tolerance—not tolerance for movements and ideas which are obviously and objectively aggressive and destructive." That such a standard as applied to his own doctrines involves him in a practical paradox—for what is "obviously and objectively aggressive and destructive" depends, surely, on whose ox is being gored—bothers him not at all.

" 'Progress' is not a neutral term," he argues. "It moves toward specific ends, and these ends are defined by the possibilities of ameliorating the human condition. Advanced industrial society is approaching the stage where continued progress would demand the radical subversion of the prevailing direction and organization . . ." This stage would be attained when the automation of production would enable all men to become free of the old bondage to labor. The old ratio of labor time to free time would be exactly reversed, so that labor time would be reduced to "marginal time." From that point on, "technical progress would transcend the realm of necessity, where it served as the instrument of domination and exploitation which thereby limited its rationality . . ."

This is the vision—a liberated society, truly free—so that to play the game of tolerance is to delay man's advance. Hence, the solemnity and certitude of Marcuse's campus disciples who have turned to revolutionary action: the assertions of "non-negotiability" of demands and the contempt for free speech for others that so quickly reduce their opponents' liberal imaginations—conditioned by centuries of what the radicals regard as *unfreedom*—to blind, uncomprehending terror.

To the *enragés*—and they are Marcuse's legitimate offspring—the rules of the game itself are under assault. Their inconsistency, in demanding freedom for themselves and repression for others, is justified as part of a higher consistency. Marcuse would join them there, for Marcuse is a visionary rebel. Seeking to construct a genuinely *new* society amid the ruins of the old, he will not be put off by any regard for so-called democratic forms that are, at best, the debased facsimiles of that Platonic ideal of democratic forms that Marcuse, in his prophetic vision, has glimpsed from afar. Nor is total consistency Marcuse's intention in a world that he considers, as it is presently constituted, to be fundamentally mad.

But the visionary nature of Marcuse's revolution is not revealed by his politics alone. Marcuse, perhaps more than he suspects, is true to an old tradition of Western revolutionary idealism in his desire to join *sexual* reform to the demand for *social* justice. In a tradition that reaches from the pre-Christian Gnostics through the Anabaptists to the social and sexual reformers of free-loving Brook Farm in nineteenth-century America, Marcuse postulates that man in a justly ordered society would be also sexually free.

His analysis of modern industrial society, and his prescription for sexual reformation, are not an attack on the concepts of puritanism and repression as such. Marcuse in his writings reveals a curiously puritanical streak, surely lost on his young admirers, in his sexual idealism. For Marcuse mere sexual license, or sexiness, is not a desirable state of affairs. Indeed, he regards the proliferation of sexual freedoms, of the vulgar sort, in the contemporary world as basically undesirable, as one more mechanism by which One-Dimensional Man is conditioned to accept his misery.

The process by which the permissible areas of sexual activity are broadened at the same time that the individual's pleasure in the activity declines, is defined by Marcuse as "sexual *desublimation*"—by which he means the very reverse of Freud's principle whereby the mature individual diverts libidinal energy to socially desirable ends by *sublimation,* a transcendence of the merely sexual.

Accurately noting the inverse correlation between public "sexiness" and genuine sexuality today, in a society in which talk and display of sex have to a marked degree displaced action, Marcuse gloomily observes: "The range of socially permissible . . . satisfaction is greatly enlarged, but through this satisfaction, the Pleasure Principle is reduced—deprived of the claims which are irreconcilable with the established society. Pleasure, thus adjusted, generates submission."

That this should be so, asserts Marcuse, is not merely tragic but unnecessary. Mankind stands on the threshold of a technological era that could reverse one of Freud's fundamental dicta; namely, that instinctual drives need to be repressed, to some degree at least, in the interests of adjusting to the Reality Principle—the ability to recognize the claims of work, to forego present pleasure for a future good. That is, in the Freudian scheme, the mark of the mature personality.

To Marcuse, Freud, in enunciating this doctrine, was not so much wrong as he was a prisoner of his time. While the necessity to endure labor was still part of the human condition in Central Europe in Freud's day, the radical transformation of technology in the twentieth century has changed this. Man today, argues Marcuse, generating a critique that might seem more appropriate to the year 2169 than to the present, suffers from *surplus* repression, not from an infantile inability to control libido. Work no longer rules.

Today, argues Marcuse, in a deliberate pun on Freud's famous essay *Beyond the Pleasure Principle,* man is perfectly capable of living, if only he knew it, beyond the *reality* principle. Psychoanalysis, which in Freud's day was a revolutionary doctrine, has in our day become a counterrevolutionary doctrine. It urges individuals to submit to an absurd society rather than attempt to transcend that society and break free not only of the sick or constricted society's norms but of the very concept of what constitutes maturity and sanity in the modern world.

What, then, is one to make of Marcuse?

The first thing that needs to be said is that it is no good assessing him, or answering him, in terms of a nineteenth-century set of liberal values that he considers obsolete—and may well be. It is the liberal creed, which is at the heart of the American understanding of history, that reason, reformism, and conciliation are central to the political process—even though Americans, by their actions, have from Shays' Rebellion to the Civil War to the draft riots and campus rebellions of the 1960's given the lie repeatedly to this saccharine notion of the American experience.

The reasonableness of a John Stuart Mill—the addiction to the notion of ideas as contending forces in a free market—has no place in Marcuse's scheme. And if he is correct in his assessment of the contemporary reality, which he judges a hell, he is right to reject the piecemeal reforms that are merely the patching together of a rotten structure that ought to be blown away by the typhoon.

Accepting Marcuse on his own terms then, as a philosopher, a prophet of a new dispensation, a mind, how *new* is his message, and how *true?* Alas, the reluctant judgment must be that he is old indeed.

He stands in a long line of nineteenth-century utopian socialist and anarchist visionaries—men such as Fourier, Proudhon, and Bakunin—who preached, in the bitter verse of the twentieth-century disillusioned Marxist poet Adam Wazyk, that "lemonade would flow in seas," and helped to prepare the way for a twentieth-century aftermath of Pharaonic bureaucracy and terror in the Soviet world that would have staggered the nineteenth-century imagination.

Like conditions bring forth like responses. Just as the long, post-Napoleonic peace of the nineteenth century brought, along with advancing technology, a sense of surfeit and boredom to Europe, so today, as the cataclysms of the First and Second World Wars fade in our memories and as western Europe and America taste an unprecedented affluence, men wish to strike out at the world that engulfs and stifles them.

Thus Marcuse is a resurfacing of a nineteenth-century tradition—but with a difference. He is a resurfacing of a nineteenth-century *German* tradition. He stands with *German* idealist philosophers of catastrophism and violence—like the neo-Hegelians, Marx, Engels, and the violently antibourgeois Nietzsche—whose murkier longings of the soul have cost the world dear. Marcuse would surely deny close kinship with a Nietzsche. But the connection between Marcuse's contempt for the middle-class fraud, self-deception, and surfeit he sees about him, and that of the nineteenth-century visionary, is clear when the latter says: "What constitutes the chief characteristic of modern souls and modern books is not the lying, but the innocence which is part and parcel of their intellectual dishonesty. . . . Our cultured men of today, our 'good' men do not lie, that is true; but it does not redound to their honor. The real lie . . . would prove too tough and strong an article for them in a long way; it would be asking them . . . to open their eyes . . . and learn to distinguish between 'true' and 'false' in their own selves."

Let us admit that most of what Nietzsche said was true enough. But the ultimate consequences for the twentieth century . . . do we need more of this?

And Marcuse is even older still. He

is a twentieth-century Gnostic—one of those who reflect, in religious vision or secular, man's sense of exile from a state of bliss, a lost Eden, a lost communion with the world of light about whose psychological origins in the infant's exile from the womb Marcuse's own mentor, Freud, would have much to say.

The underlying religious strain in Marcuse is, in any case, not difficult to detect. He who lays up worldly goods, he seems to say, lays up trash. In prophetic accents he tells us—with what proof?—of a world of light that could be ours.

There is a curious reversal of roles in Marcuse. His notion that the potential dissident in our society, the now abject One-Dimensional Man, has been bought off by spurious concessions is a Leninist notion: Lenin warned the masses against the fraudulent concessions of the bourgeoisie—the reforms that accomplished nothing basic to change the ultimate character of society. Here Marcuse reveals his affinity with the Marxist-Leninists, whom he otherwise denounces. But in the classical Marxist conception it is *religion,* along with spurious material reforms, that is the opiate of the masses. Marcuse, on the other hand, seems to be saying that it is worldly goods—the high minimum wage, the television set, the back-yard barbecue, the second-hand Cadillac—that are the opiate of contemporary man, forever barring him from a quasi-religious state of consciousness that could be his.

Thus Marcuse is an oddly ambiguous figure on the contemporary intellectual scene—a modern man, seemingly, whose message, for all its tricking out in the dress of neo-Marxism and neo-Freudianism, is, to say the least, antique.

Yet even if the message is an old one, the question still must be asked: is it true?

There seems to be much in Marcuse's doctrine that is true. The middle-class society that has emerged in western Europe and America—Marcuse's advanced industrial society—does operate in totalitarian modes, smothering alternative visions and amounting, let us admit it, to a crashing bore. Our society does succeed—by catering to the low, though not the lowest, in man.

But how high, in fact, are the aspirations of humanity? Marcuse would have us believe that the plebs could live in a kind of ecstasy; but how well does Marcuse know his plebs?

And Marcuse may be right when he points out the ultimate irrationality of an economy—which provides the affluence that buys off dissent—that is based on the final madness: production of a war machine that might annihilate the world. But if "advanced industrial society" is a useful generic term, what of the affluence of West Germany and Japan today, which since 1945 have built their economic wonders on a civilian sector, hardly producing at all for war?

One may go through the list, ticking off things Marcuse says that seem shrewdly true; he is eminently worth reading. Or is he? Cutting through the tangled prose, the liberal quotations left in the original German or French, the abstruse references to philosophers and sociologists long departed from the popular consciousness, a faint tingle of recognition comes. We have read all this before—but not so much in Hegel and Lenin and Freud and the young Marx as in our last selection from the Literary Guild or the Book-of-the-Month Club.

We have read him before, as Marcuse himself has acknowledged: in Vance Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders, The Status Seekers, The Waste Makers;* in William H. Whyte's *The Organization Man;* and in Fred J. Cook's *The Warfare State.*

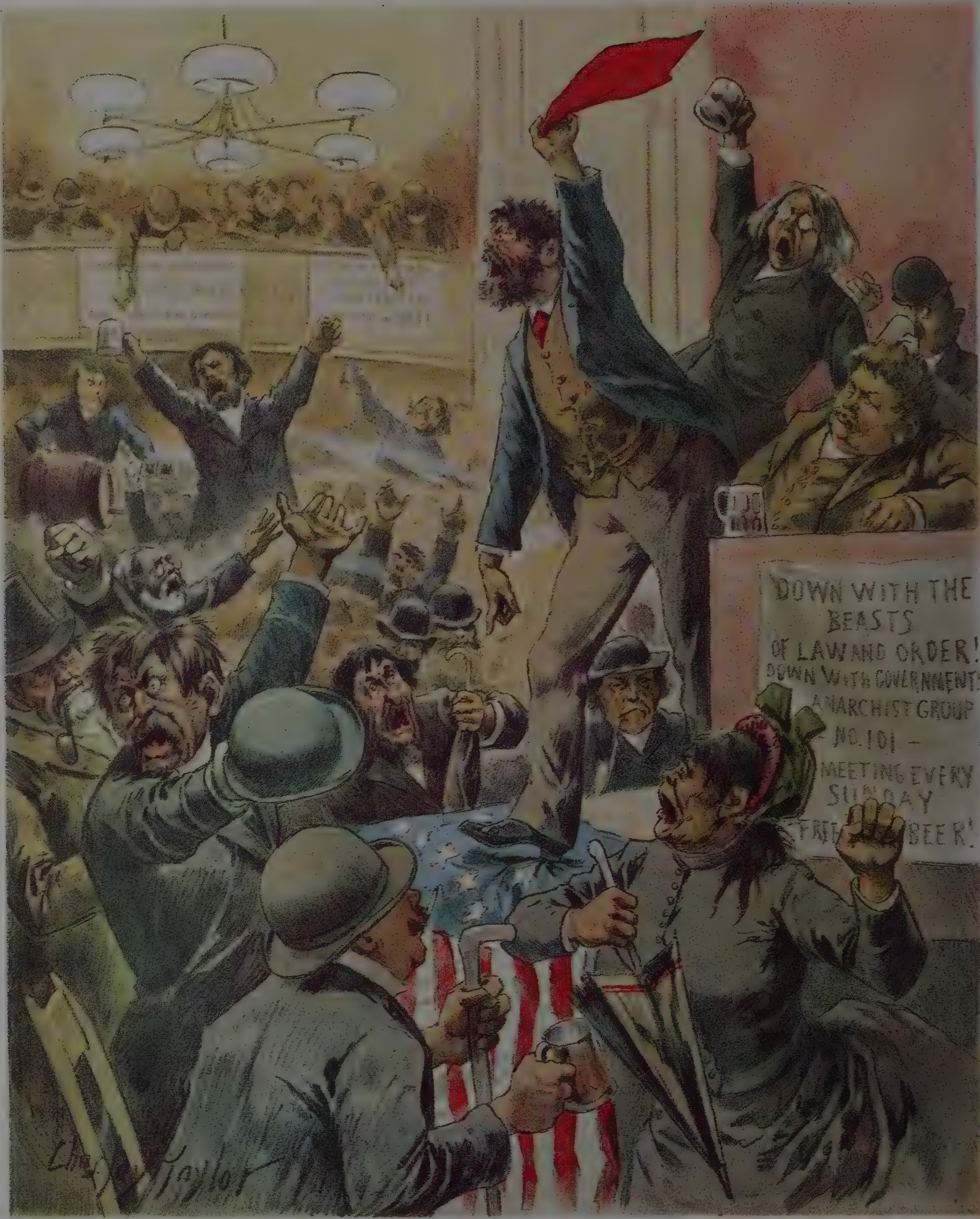
Marcuse is the reverse of a popularizer—one who makes abstruse thinking accessible to the masses. Marcuse takes popular doctrine and cloaks it in ideology and dense prose. Hence his appeal to the self-conscious dissidents among the campus young today. None of these rebels would be caught dead with the Book-of-the-Month. But Marcuse has made it all right. You cannot cite Vance Packard as witness for the revolution; but you can cite Herbert Marcuse.

In the final analysis Marcuse seems to be a two-dimensional philosopher. He has sweep but little depth. And he may be worse. He is like that other unwise old man, King Lear, who had to be taught by catastrophe.

The trouble is that Marcuse has not learned the lesson. For angry black militants to talk revolution is forgivable. For the Students for a Democratic Society in our midst to mouth the slogans of violence and revolution is quite understandable. Americans, by and large, do not know how precarious a thing is civilization, what volcanic evil lies under the seemingly placid surface of man. White Americans, old and young, have been insulated from the experience of evil for more than a century—certainly since the days of the Civil War. But not Marcuse.

He was born in Berlin in 1898, and was forced to flee Hitler in 1934. I do not know whether Marcuse was one of those who subscribed to the doctrine of "Social Fascism"—the extraordinary lunacy on the far left of the Weimar Republic that held the "lying" Social Democrats, rather than the Nazis, to be the chief enemy. But Marcuse shared in the nearly unanimous leftist intellectuals' complaint that, in the words of Paul Cassirer, the so-called democratic revolution in post-World War I Germany was "nothing but a great swindle—*Schiebung.*"

For these men the lying and compromise of the Weimar Republic were unendurable—until the Nazis taught them, as King Lear ultimately learned and Herbert Marcuse has not, that it could be worse.


DOWN WITH THE
BEASTS
OF LAW AND ORDER!
DOWN WITH GOVERNMENT!
ANARCHIST GROUP
NO. 101
MEETING EVERY
SUNDAY
FRI
BEER!

*In an 1887* Puck *cartoon drunk and disorderly anarchists would seem to refute their theory that man can live without laws*

# The Anarchists

## (who are with us again)

"... the government of man by man," wrote Proudhon, "under whatever name it is disguised, is oppression"

It was a dignified occasion, one of those expositions in which an expanding and self-confident society ritually congratulates itself. The head of state was present to give luster; he stood shaking hands in a receiving line. Among those in line was a young man, slightly built, with a handkerchief wrapped around one hand. It concealed a small pistol. He stepped forward, fired twice, and his victim fell, mortally wounded. The year was 1901, the place Buffalo, New York, and the victim William McKinley, twenty-fifth president of the United States.

The murderer, Leon Czolgosz, was in many ways a typical assassin: a solitary brooder, ineffectual and naïve, with a strong megalomaniac streak. He rationalized his deed, in his limited vocabulary, by reference to a political doctrine that had already, in the previous decade, cost the lives of a number of prominent people, as well as those of private citizens blown to pieces by random bomb explosions.

President Carnot of France had been stabbed by an assassin crying "Long live anarchy"; the Spanish prime minister, Canovas, was shot as he sat reading a newspaper. Europe's royal houses, too, had suffered: the elderly but still beautiful Empress Elizabeth of Austria was stabbed with a homemade dagger as she walked by the lake at Geneva; King Umberto of Italy survived one attempt on his life only to be shot in his carriage three years later. In each case the assassin made no attempt to escape and gloried in his crime, justifying it as a legitimate political act in the face of an intolerably immoral and repressive society.

What is the relevance of the politics of anarchism to us today? The wave of assassinations was merely the most dramatic aspect of anarchism in the nineteenth century. It was a philosophical creed, a dream of a new future for human society, expounded by men who were often scholars, gentlemen, aristocrats—very different from the desperate, impoverished, and usually ill-educated young men whom their words sometimes drove to violence. Anarchism, in the intensity of its repudiation of existing society and its rejection of the more limited and purposeful attempts to change it, has always had a certain affinity with blind destructiveness, but that was not originally seen as its essence. And though political assassination awakens sickening echoes in our own minds, the chief relevance of anarchism today lies more in the repetition, conscious or not, of anarchist doctrines and slogans by the New Left and those who espouse a different kind of violence in their rejection of consensus politics.

The use of violence not so much for limited ends but as a form of propaganda, the repudiation of all centralized social organization as a denial of human freedom and spontaneity, the rejection of party hierarchies, left as well as right, are themes that bring the New Left far closer to the doctrines of nineteenth-century anarchism than to "orthodox" communism. In place of a scientific and technological meritocracy the radical student movement and the New Left profess to offer decentralization, workers' control of factories, student power, and a return in all activities to the human scale. These, as Paul Goodman recently pointed out, are virtually the standard anarchist proposals for a voluntary federation of self-governing enterprises. The enemy is seen as "the system," an impersonal machine for turning human beings into cogs, components of the machine; and the classical protest against the machine is undoubtedly anarchism. Anarchism, which earlier in this century seemed the deadest of the nineteenth-century political creeds, an impossible idealism sometimes degenerating into a squalid absurdity, spurned by liberals, fascists, and communists alike, is emphatically alive again.

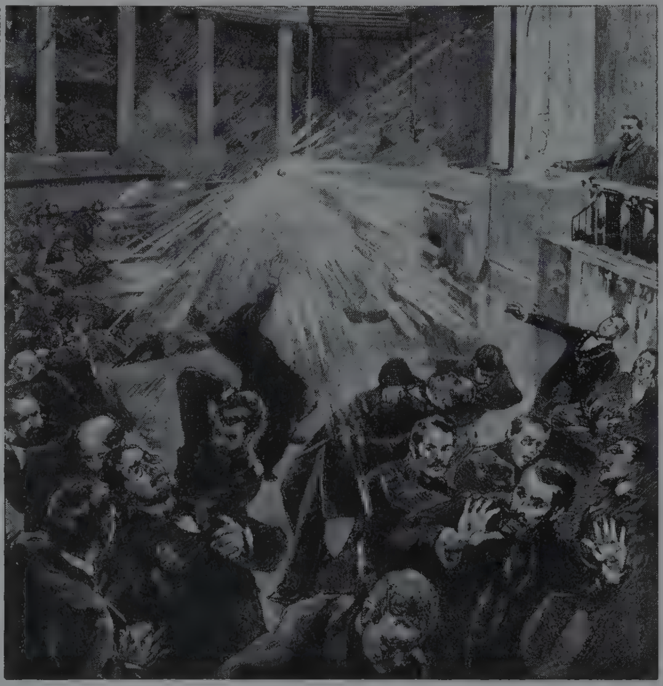
The anarchist notoriously has two contrasting images. On the one hand, he is a kind of secular saint or hermit, a gentle sage, white-bearded perhaps, like the aged Tolstoy, unworldly and possibly mad, but mad in the manner of a Holy Fool. He is an essentially benign figure, evoking reverence and possibly pity, an antimaterialist ascetic and a believer in the simple life. Authority is cursed by blood. His hostility to the state derives from the repugnance he feels for its machinery of coercion, for armies, prisons, law courts, guillotines (a public execution

*By* J. W. BURROW

Tolstoy witnessed in Paris in 1857 was a turning point in his life). He is probably a vegetarian. Such, with obvious individual differences, is the type of the Englishman William Godwin, whose passion for individual independence was so great that he felt men betrayed it by collaborating in an orchestra to play other men's compositions; the type of Tolstoy and Gandhi, of Thoreau and Prince Kropotkin.

The other side of the picture is the anarchist as assassin. Theatrically bearded and wearing a floppy black hat, furtively fingering his homemade bomb—his "antibourgeois product," as an anarchist phrase of the 1890's described it—he lurks in the dark corner of the imagination along with Dracula and Fu Manchu. But the anarchist terrorist was a real enough menace, and so were his bombs. A young man—virtually all the anarchist assassins were young—pale, fanatical, ascetic in his own fashion, though often too poor to be anything else, his "eyes burning with a strange light," he is self-consciously doomed. In his own mind he is an avenging angel of death visiting an utterly corrupt society. To others he is a criminal; sometimes, indeed, he may graduate to assassination from the pettier crimes of larceny and fraud, for bourgeois morality has no meaning for him. This, like the other, is of course a composite portrait, but it is a fair enough likeness of many of the arsonists and assassins who committed apparently pointless acts of violence in Europe and the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is the type that Dostoevsky's Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment* tried to be and found that he could not, tormented as he was by the need for confession and atonement after his crime. He was atypical. The typical assassin of this kind defied his judges and went to the scaffold with what came to be a ritual cry: "Long live anarchy! Long live destruction!"

How are we to resolve the paradox? How can two types so apparently dissimilar wear the same political label? What possible connection can there be between a reverence for life and a respect for the freedom of others, carried to lengths that most people find impossible or excessive, and the senseless destruction of innocent human beings? One obvious connection is their common refusal to compromise, their rejection of an ordinary, easygoing acceptance of the world as it is. The terrorist of this type is in his way as stern and puritan a moralist as the anarchist sage. Both are demanding, as it were, that humanity should wipe the slate clean and start again. Both hate and despise many of the normal and, to most people, harmless features of civilization and human nature. Godwin's suspicion of orchestras was matched by Tolstoy's dislike of theatres, and, of course, the notorious hatred he developed for sex.


ROGER VIOLLET

*A bomb thrown by Auguste Vaillant in 1893 rains a shower of nails upon members of the Chamber of Deputies in Paris.*

Moreover, even in the means they wish to adopt there is a similarity between the quietist and the activist. For the latter is not an activist in the ordinary sense; he does not hope for any immediate practical gain from his acts; he does not murder in order to seize power or to eliminate some particular human obstacle to his plans. He is, oddly enough, concerned to persuade by example. The victims are almost incidental; sometimes, indeed, the anarchist terrorist confined himself to damage to property. His violence can be quite unfocused, because it is essentially a gesture, a symbol; like the pacifist variety of anarchist, he is concerned to testify and to convert. The name by which this kind of symbolic violence came to be known in the late nineteenth century was "the propaganda of the deed."

Many of the aspirations of the anarchists are to be found clad in Biblical language in the heretical sects of the Middle Ages and the sixteenth century. In fact, the underlying tenets of political anarchism are deeply rooted in the spiritual history of Western man. To free human relations from all artificial constraints; to live a social life without any central coercive hierarchy or organization; to be as free in society as in the supposed state of nature; to replace conventions by spontaneity, external sanctions by inner purity, and a legal code of justice by an unforced brotherhood of man—these are long-standing dreams. Anarchism pushes to their absolute limits—to absurdity, one may wish to say—the ideas of personal freedom and human equality that have played so large a part in the history of the past two thousand years and condemns absolutely all social arrangements that fall short of these ideals. The half measures and horse trading of representative democracy are seen by anarchism as betrayals of the ideal and are sometimes regarded as more abhorrent, because more hypocritical, than despotism itself.

Anarchism as a political slogan and a program was first put forward in the 1840's by the French artisan Pierre Joseph Proudhon. Hitherto, the word "anarchy," deriving from the Greek *anarchos*—"without a ruler"—had been used only as a term of rejection and abuse. Proudhon proudly embraced it; it was exactly what he believed in. Together with his onetime disciple the Russian nobleman Mikhail Bakunin, he became one of the founding fathers of the anarchist movement. Both regarded liberal constitutionalism as a sham and authoritarian communism as a remedy as bad as the disease. Proudhon speaks for all anarchists when he proclaims that "the government of man by man, under whatever name it is disguised, is oppression," and Bakunin echoes him: "All exercise of authority perverts and all submission to authority humiliates."

"I voted against the Constitution," Proudhon characteristically said in 1848, "not because it contains things of which I disapprove and does not contain things of which I approve. I voted against the Constitution because it is a Constitution." In a similar vein Bakunin declared: "The epoch of parliamentary life, of Constituent and National Assemblies and so forth is over. . . . I do not believe in constitutions and laws . . . We need something different; inspiration, life, a new lawless and therefore free world."

Proudhon saw the future anarchist society as consisting of independent small workshops freely exchanging goods, while Bakunin's vision of the future was more collectivist. But this merely reflects differences not so much of theory as of style and temperament; the negations of anarchism leave a vacuum into which many different ingredients are drawn. Both Proudhon and Bakunin craved absolute independence of external constraint, but they disagreed in their conceptions of the nature of this independence. For Proudhon, the thrifty, puritanical peasant-artisan, it was the self-respecting, frugal independence of the lower-

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**Pierre Joseph Proudhon (1809–1865)**

Proudhon, the first political writer to accept the name "anarchist," was the son of a French innkeeper and came of peasant stock. To the question proposed in his most celebrated book, *What Is Property?*, he returned the famous answer, "Property is theft"—which was effective as a slogan but somewhat misleading as a guide to his ideas. Influenced by German philosophy and disillusioned with parliamentary republicanism, which he saw as a new kind of tyranny, Proudhon looked to a future without laws or a central state authority: "In place of laws, we will put contracts; no more laws voted by the majority, or even unanimously. Each citizen, each town, each industrial union will make its own laws. In place of political powers we will put economic forces." Among other proposals, Proudhon suggested the abolition of money and a return to barter. Consistent in his opposition to centralization, he supported the South and States' rights in the American Civil War.

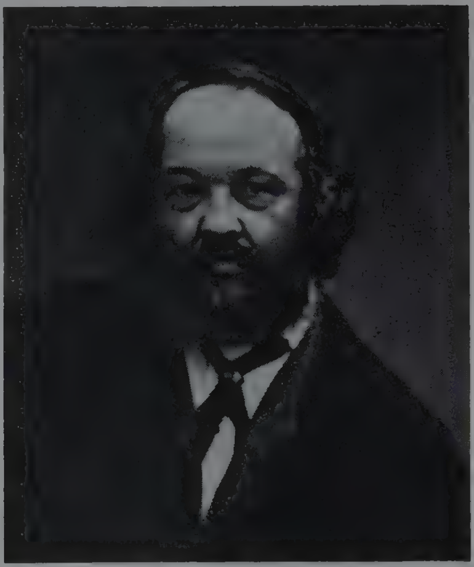
Proudhon was a self-educated man, a printer by trade, and his ideas found their greatest acceptance among handicraftsmen. "The workshop," he proclaimed, "is the basis of the new society." He exercised a powerful influence on the ideas of the French socialist movement and on trade unions. In character he had a peasant's dourness and independence. "To be governed," he wrote, "means to be, at each operation, at each transaction, at each movement, noted, registered, controlled, taxed, stamped, measured, valued, assessed, patented, licensed, authorized, endorsed, admonished, hampered, reformed, rebuked, arrested." In some ways he also had a peasant narrowness and suspiciousness of outlook. He was xenophobic, anti-Semitic, antifeminist, and intolerant of sexual deviation. He endorsed the family as the basic social unit, and his ideal society appears to have been one of austere, independent patriarchs leading frugal and hard-working lives.

Proudhon's beliefs often seem compounded of paradox. Though he named the Bible as a chief influence, he rejected orthodox religion, regarding its God as a tyrant, a view he expressed in another famous aphorism: "God is Evil." He fought on the barricades in 1848 and served a term of imprisonment for his views under Louis Napoleon, but Proudhon was a rather unwilling revolutionary—he disapproved of conspiracy and never endorsed terrorism.

middle-class paterfamilias, whose ideal and boast it is to live by his own efforts, calling no man master and owing no man anything. Marx not unjustly called Proudhon's anarchism the apotheosis of the *petite bourgeoisie.* For Bakunin, the rootless, shiftless Russian aristocrat, it was the irresponsible independence of the Bohemian and of what Marx called the *Lumpenproletariat*—criminals, loafers, artists, impoverished intellectuals, unfrocked priests, and bankrupt gentry—in which class Bakunin, in contrast to Marx, placed great faith as a revolutionary force. Bakunin's anarchism is the anarchism not of the *petit bourgeois* who prides himself on being self-supporting but of the Bohemian aristocratic scrounger who is cheerfully unconscious of his own scrounging.

Proudhon and Bakunin represent the two interwoven strands of nineteenth-century anarchism. Proudhon was, rather reluctantly, a revolutionary, but he was opposed to plotting and random violence. To Bakunin revolution was in itself an intensely satisfying experience, and endless conspiracy a way of life. It was he more than any other man who helped to create the links between anarchism and terrorism in the latter part of the century.

There was already in Europe a tradition of conspiracy and political assassination, but it had hitherto been the preserve of the various nationalist movements and of the authoritarian communists. Communist secret societies had flourished in France in the 1830's and 1840's. The most celebrated of the communist conspirators, Auguste Blanqui, was a revolutionary who might have been born of some timid bourgeois's nightmare, with his white lips and hair, dressed all in black even to the black gloves he always wore. A genuine intransigent, he spent thirty-seven years of his life in prison. Karl Marx approved of his aims but not of his methods; Bakunin adopted the methods though he disagreed with the aims. More sober revolutionaries looked askance at the Blanquists. The



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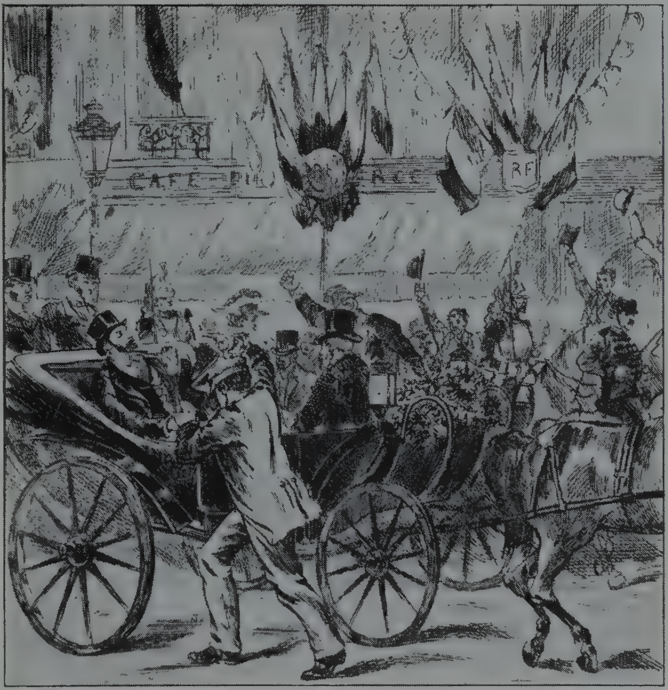
**Mikail Bakunin (1814–1876)**

Bakunin, the son of a Russian landowner, became the leading figure in the European anarchist movement. He fought Marx for control of the First International in 1872, forcing him to move the general council from London to New York to prevent the organization from being dominated by the anarchists. Unlike many Russian intellectuals, he was not turned into a revolutionary by conditions in Russia itself and was still politically orthodox when he left the country in 1840 to study philosophy in Germany. He subsequently moved to Paris, where he came under the influence of Proudhon. Bakunin had great faith in a forthcoming revolution of the Slav peoples, which he tried ineffectually to organize in 1848. He fought at the barricades in Dresden in 1849 in company with the composer Richard Wagner. He was arrested, twice sentenced to death, and then reprieved. After two years in Saxon and Austrian prisons, Bakunin was handed over to the Russians. While held in solitary confinement in the Peter-and-Paul fortress in St. Petersburg, he wrote an abject confession and apology to the czar, though he refused to implicate any of his associates. At last, in 1857, he was sent to Siberia; after four years in exile he escaped, returning to Europe via Yokahama and San Francisco.

Bakunin was a titan of a man, weighing 280 pounds, with shaggy hair and flashing eyes. An enormous eater and talker but sexually impotent, he poured his energies into endless plotting and propaganda. "Everything about him," his friend Wagner wrote, "was colossal, and he was full of a primitive exuberance and strength." The Russian critic Vissarion Belinsky, who knew him well as a young man, made the same point more critically: "A marvelous man, a deep, primitive, leonine nature—this cannot be denied him. But his demands, his childishness, his braggadocio, his unscrupulousness, his disingenuousness—all this makes friendship with him impossible. He loves ideas, not men. He wants to dominate with his personality, not to love."

Bakunin's own ideas were confused, and his books are fragmentary and full of digressions; but his cult of revolutionary destruction and violence played a part in fostering the terrorist side of the anarchist movement. Personally Bakunin was gentle and generous and showed an old-fashioned courtesy to women, whom he did not like to see drink or smoke.

Russian socialist Aleksandr Herzen ironically described the typical manners and appearance of such conspirators: "They mysteriously invite one to extraordinarily important interviews, at night if possible, or in some inconvenient place. Meeting their friends in public, they do not like saluting them with a bow, but greet them with a significant glance. Many of them keep their address a secret, never telling one what day they are going away, never say where they are going, write in cypher or invisible ink news which is plainly printed in the newspapers."


ROGER VIOLLET

*The French president Sadi Carnot is fatally stabbed by an Italian anarchist in June, 1894, while riding through Lyon.*

Bakunin himself had a childish love of mystification and a large capacity for political fantasy. He would hint at the existence of vast international revolutionary underground movements, of which he was the head, and which in fact existed almost entirely in his imagination. He would send letters in code, enclosing the code in the same envelope. Herzen, who was occasionally his reluctant accomplice, compared his delight in plotting to the innocently furtive excitement of preparing a Christmas tree. Yet like many others he could not help being captivated by Bakunin's personal recklessness and idealism, his childlike enthusiasm and boundless, demonic energy: "His activity, his laziness, his appetite, like his gigantic stature and the everlasting sweat he was in, everything, in fact, was on a superhuman scale, as he was himself; and he was himself a giant with his leonine head and tousled mane."

Bakunin, though personally a kind and gentle man, exulted in the thought of a clean sweep of the debris of a restrictive and inegalitarian civilization, declaring: "The passion for destruction is also a creative passion." In 1869 he became associated with one of the most sinister figures in the whole murky, blood-streaked history of clandestine Russian politics. Half delinquent, half fanatic, Sergei Nechaev arrived in Switzerland announcing that he had escaped from prison in Russia (though there has never been any evidence for this). Ecstatically, Bakunin wrote of him: "They are magnificent, these young fanatics, believers without gods, heroes without rhetoric." He immediately made Nechaev a member of "the Russian Section of the World Revolutionary Alliance, No. 2771." Like No. 2771's prison escape, the existence of the other two thousand seven hundred and seventy has to be taken on trust.

Fantasy met fantasy, but in Nechaev it was mixed with the cold-blooded calculation of the con man. After milking Bakunin of a considerable sum of money, he returned to Russia and founded a small revolutionary group. From then onward the story has the atmosphere of a Dostoevsky novel. Indeed, Dostoevsky took it as the basis for the greatest of all fictional studies of the terrorist mentality, his novel *The Possessed.* One of the members of the group, a young man named Ivan Ivanov, opposed Nechaev. Nechaev called a meeting of the others, declaring that "the Central Committee"—a purely imaginary body—had evidence that Ivanov was a spy. They lured the unfortunate young man to a lonely garden at night and murdered him. The body was discovered, and Nechaev's group was revealed. He himself fled but was eventually hunted down. Sentenced to life imprisonment, he died ten years later in the Peter-and-Paul fortress, the grim prison on the banks of the river Neva where Bakunin had lain in chains twenty years before.

Nechaev remains an obscure, enigmatic, and haunting figure. That he was a swindler is clear, but how far did he believe his own fantasies? What drove him on to danger and to death in the czar's prison—dedication, love of power, or the sheer lust for destruction? If we may believe his words, we can gain some clue to his character in the *Revolutionary Catechism,* which he drew up with Bakunin. It is the last word in the self-dramatization of anarchist nihilism. The opening paragraphs of the pamphlet give an idea of the content of the whole:

> Paragraph 1. The revolutionary is a lost man; he has no interests of his own, no cause of his own, no feelings, no habits, no belongings; he does not even have a name. Everything in him is absorbed by a single exclusive interest, a single thought, a single passion—the revolution.
>
> Paragraph 2. In the very depths of his being, not just in words but in deed, he has broken every tie with the civil order, with the educated world and all laws, conventions and generally accepted conditions, and with the ethics of this world. He will be the implacable enemy of this world, and if he continues to live in it, that will only be so as to destroy it the more effectively.

But to proclaim such an aim was one

thing, to realize it another. The cult of anarchist violence manifested itself in late nineteenth-century Europe in two forms: in peasant insurrections and in urban terrorism.

The first flourished in the areas where anarchism has always found its main strength, in the industrially undeveloped parts of Europe, especially Italy and, a little later, Spain. Here there were traditions of brigandage and savage peasant uprisings. Anarchism appealed because anarchist doctrines were in part a protest not only against the state but against modern capitalism and the necessary disciplines—which the Marxists, for example, accepted as inevitable—of industrial society. Peasants bewildered and enraged by legal and financial regulations that seemed to rob them of their produce and that they could not understand, and small independent handicraftsmen threatened by the competition of mass production, were fertile soil for anarchist propaganda. They, rather than the industrial workers on whom the Marxists relied, formed the rank and file of the anarchist movement. One of the first acts of the various Italian and Spanish peasant insurrectionists, apart from church burning, was to burn the local government archives, the paper chains in which the peasant was enmeshed and his indebtedness recorded. Essentially, however, anarchism only provided a superstructure of theory for the deep-seated, habitual violence of an oppressed rural population; the latter was just as evident in Ireland, where there was no anarchist propaganda at all. In such communities the bandit was often a folk hero; Bakunin adopted him as an honorary anarchist. "Brigandage," he wrote, "is one of the most honored aspects of the people's life in Russia. . . . The brigand in Russia is the true and only revolutionary . . . the irreconcilable, unwearying, untameable revolutionary in deed." He also spoke hopefully of what he called the childish and demonic delight of the Russian peasant in fire.

Rural anarchism, for all its atrocities, often had a certain naïve innocence. Observers in Spain during the Civil War in the 1930's were touched by the simplicity, the complete faith and literalness, with which the peasants took their anarchist slogans and ran their anarchist communes.

*The U.S. president William McKinley is shot point-blank by Leon Czolgosz at an exposition in Buffalo in September, 1901.*

CULVER PICTURES

The darkest side of anarchist violence was the urban terrorism that, while it was centered in France, swept across Europe between 1880 and the First World War and spread to the United States in the wake of European immigration. One inspiration for it was the assassination in 1881 of Czar Alexander II. Assassination became one of the facts of Russian public life; between 1881 and 1911 the terrorists' bag included a minister of education, two ministers of the interior, a brace of generals, a prime minister, a grand duke, and, of course, a czar.

Most of the Russian terrorists were not strictly anarchists but revolutionary democrats driven to isolated acts of violence by their sense of impotence in the face of czarist despotism and the inertia of the masses. Yet psychologically they had much in common with the anarchist terrorists of western Europe, who eagerly celebrated their successes as victories in a common cause. The latter were made desperate, paradoxically, not by the harshness of European political conditions but by their relative mildness. The coming of universal suffrage in the last quarter of the century, the growth of trade unions and parliamentary socialist parties, threatened to deprive the intransigent revolutionaries of all hope of mass support. Even Marxists, though they continued to mutter about the coming doom of capitalism, seemed to have abandoned revolution for the ways of constitutional legality. Only the anarchists remained obdurate, and it seemed all the more vital to them to demonstrate in some dramatic fashion that the class war was not dead. It was the Anarchist International Congress of 1881 that approved "the propaganda of the deed."

The notion of a deed of violence for propaganda purposes is essentially a theatrical one, and much of what followed has an air of black farce. French anarchist journals of the 1880's published articles on "scientific studies" (bomb manufacture) and encouraged chemistry in the home. Tombolas were held with guns, revolvers, and daggers as prizes. Crop burning was advocated, so that the peasantry, exasperated by hunger, might rise in revolt, and cooks were advised to poison their masters. Rats and mice were to be soaked in gasoline, set alight, and sent into selected buildings. One inflammatory anarchist journal was financed by the Paris police, who found the subscription list interesting, while the first "anarchist" outrage in France, an attempt to blow up a statue of the statesman Thiers at Saint-Germain, may well have been planned by the prefect himself.

The outrages that followed, however, were grimly in earnest. Respectable society rested upon a volcano. In the capitals of the greatest nations of the world, with their imposing façade of public buildings and private affluence, there existed a squalor and misery scarcely surpassed in the poorest villages of Ireland or Sicily: slums and sweatshops, insanitary courts and alleys, whose inhabitants appeared to the comfortable and prosperous as dwellers in an infernal region. "I have been in Hell," said the British Liberal minister Lloyd George after a visit early in this century to the East End of London. In the miserable, overcrowded tenements of Europe's teeming cities and the boom towns of America there was inflammable material: pallid young men working endless hours to earn a pittance with which to support mothers, wives, and children—or, worse, unemployed and living on the verge of starvation, yet with time to brood in bitterness, to read anarchist journals like *La Révolte*, and to go to anarchist meetings like the one in Chicago attended by Czolgosz shortly before he shot President McKinley. Nechaev, who knew this life, wrote: "If we think of our surroundings, we must inevitably conclude that we are living in the kingdom of the insane—so terrible and unnatural are people's relations to each other, so strange and unbelievable their attitude towards the mass of injustices, vileness and baseness that constitutes our social régime."

Such men found in the anarchist notion of "the propaganda of the deed" the chance for one final action that would give meaning to their lives. Bourgeois society deserved no consideration; it was a vampire, sucking the blood of the poor and flaunting its fine carriages and sleek horses, its fashionably dressed women and enormous banquets, in the faces of those who had

ROGER VIOLLET

**François Ravachol (1859–1892)**

Ravachol, who was of Dutch extraction and whose real name was Koenigstein, was the most celebrated of the anarchist terrorists whose crimes sent a wave of fear through French society in the early 1890's. Small and sickly-looking, he spent his youth in extreme poverty—his father, an ironworker, having abandoned his wife and children. Ravachol was remembered as a good boy, who took the younger children to church. When he was eighteen, he exchanged his religious faith for anarchism, becoming at the same time a petty thief and counterfeiter; on weekends he earned a few francs by playing the accordion. His first major crimes appear to have been purely mercenary, though he subsequently claimed that he committed them to make money for the anarchist cause. In the course of one robbery, which recalls the crime of Dostoevsky's Raskolnikov, he murdered a ninety-two-year-old miser and his housekeeper. Other murders and a tomb robbery were also attributed to him. He was arrested but escaped.

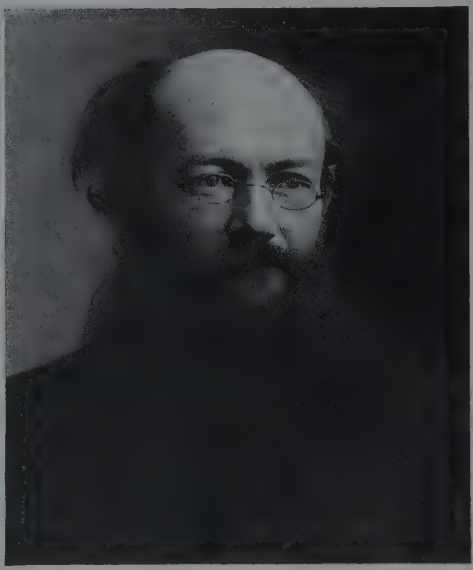
In March, 1892, he blew up the houses of a judge and a prosecutor with homemade bombs, doing a good deal of damage but hurting no one. It was his single distinctively political crime. Betrayed by a café waiter who had been made suspicious by Ravachol's anarchist conversation, he was arrested again. Ravachol seems unpromising material for any kind of cult; he was in fact at one time suspected by fellow anarchists of being a police spy. His behavior at his trial and execution, however, made him an anarchist hero. Before his judges Ravachol declared: "I have made a sacrifice of my person. If I still struggle, it is for the anarchist idea. I do not care if I am condemned. I know that I shall be avenged." He received the death sentence with the cry "Long live anarchy!" and walked to the guillotine singing an obscene and blasphemous song.

An extraordinary cult immediately grew up around this former grave robber and murderer. His name was adopted as a verb—*ravacholiser*, meaning to assassinate. The café in which he had been arrested was blown up and the proprietor killed. Songs were written about him. But the crispest comment on Ravachol was provided by the anarchist journal *La Révolte;* his explosions had, it said, "to some extent rehabilitated the reputation of dynamite, which previous attempts had somewhat diminished."

scarcely enough to eat. There was a kind of terrible puritanism about the anarchist outrage. Even the modest, hard-working petty bourgeois was guilty; he connived at the system, helped to make it work, even profited from it in a small way. One of the most fanatical assassins, Emile Henry, wrote in prison: "I wanted to show the bourgeoisie that their pleasures would no longer be complete, that their insolent triumphs would be disturbed, that their golden calf would shake on its pedestal until the final shock would fling it down in mud and blood."

Emerging from the slums to intimidate respectable society, the anarchist terrorists seemed to resemble the cholera bacilli that earlier in the century had spread from the poor quarters to the houses of the rich, to establish in death a kinship that life had denied. The casually placed bomb, too, was no respecter of persons, and it was not only royalty and political leaders who suffered. In 1893 a young man threw a bomb from the public gallery of the Chamber of Deputies in Paris. It was a saucepan filled with nails and killed no one, though a number of deputies were injured. "Messieurs," the President announced, "the session continues." The assailant, Auguste Vaillant, declared that he had not intended to kill.

Vaillant's history was typical. He had been abandoned by his father at an early age. He was quiet and mild in manner, gentle and thoughtful in appearance. He had moved from one poorly paid job to another, struggling to support his mistress and his child, but the burden of life was too great. He had resolved, he said, to make his death "the cry of a whole class demanding its rights." He borrowed some money, rented a hotel room, and there patiently prepared his bomb. The death sentence passed on Vaillant aroused considerable sympathy, and sixty deputies, including some of the injured, signed a petition for reprieve. At dawn on February 5, 1894, Vaillant went to the guillotine asserting that he would be avenged and crying, "Death


ARCHIVES PHOTOGRAPHIQUES

**Prince Piotr Kropotkin (1842–1921)**

Kropotkin, though highly influential, was an unusual figure in the anarchist movement. He was interested in science; he gave an enthusiastic welcome to the progress of technology; and when anarchist terrorism was at its height, he maintained the tradition of scholarly and constructive anarchist writing and propaganda. A former personal page of Czar Alexander II, he served as a young army officer in Siberia, where he was appalled by the conditions of the prisoners and attracted by the lives of the primitive people of the region; he traveled extensively among the tribesmen of Russian Asia, becoming a noted explorer and geographer. It was at this time that he read the works of Proudhon and began to agitate for revolution. Disguising himself as a peasant, he proseletized in the working-class districts of St. Petersburg. He was arrested. After spending two years in prison, he made a daring escape from a military hospital and settled down in England.

Kropotkin's anarchism was more communistic than that of Proudhon or Bakunin. He envisaged a society in which goods were held entirely in common, people helping themselves according to their needs. He pinned his hopes on the then-fashionable doctrine of evolution, for which he provided an anarchist-collectivist interpretation in his book *Mutual Aid* (1902). Recalling the way of life he had known in the extreme conditions of the Siberian steppes, Kropotkin pointed to co-operation within species, rather than competition, as a major factor in the struggle for existence; spontaneous anarchistic co-operation was, he became convinced, the next stage of human evolution. He seized eagerly on any examples of voluntary co-operation, becoming highly enthusiastic about the existence of such associations in Victorian England as the British Life-Boat Association. Kropotkin saw labor-saving machines as instruments of human emancipation and enthusiastically acclaimed the invention of a washing machine. Though he spent most of his later life in England, he founded and for a time edited *La Révolte* and spent three years in a French prison. He returned to Russia in 1917, after the February Revolution; there he remained for the rest of his life in spite of his opposition to Lenin and the Bolsheviks. When Kropotkin died in Moscow in 1921, a procession of mourners five miles long followed his coffin to the grave.

to bourgeois society and long live anarchy!"

Vaillant's confidence that he would be avenged was well founded. A number of the anarchist assassinations and outrages were specifically carried out in revenge for the execution of anarchists or for the penal laws hurriedly enacted by frightened governments. Violence spiraled. In 1887 a bomb was thrown at police in Chicago's Haymarket Square, killing seven; public hysteria was not finally calmed until four anarchists had been executed and others given prison sentences for nothing but guilt by association. Anarchists and governments alike adopted the principles of the vendetta. Vaillant, who had killed no one, became a martyr, and President Carnot, who had refused to reprieve him, did not long survive him. François Ravachol, who had helped to begin the whole bloody cycle in the early 1890's, planted his bombs in revenge for the ill treatment and imprisonment of some anarchist leaders after a demonstration. The café where Ravachol had been arrested was blown up and the proprietor killed. Such was the terror in Paris that members of the police were universally shunned; no one would give them lodgings.

GERNSHEIM COLL., UNIV. OF TEXAS

*In an attempt on the life of King Alfonso XIII of Spain in 1906, a bomb goes off in Madrid, killing twenty bystanders.*

The greatest panic of all, however, was caused by an act of such apparently casual terrorism that it seemed that no one and no place were safe. The Café Terminus, at the Gare St. Lazare in Paris, was no resort of the rich or the powerful. One evening a week after the execution of Vaillant a bomb exploded, killing one of the customers and wounding a number of others. The murderer, young Emile Henry, declared that the bomb was in revenge for Vaillant's death and regretted that more had not been killed. Pale and fine featured, the son of an old revolutionary, Henry, who admitted to several other bomb outrages, was better educated than most anarchist terrorists. A brilliant former pupil of France's chief school of science, the Ecole Polytechnique, he had the arrogance of intellectual pride, and there was a cold, ruthless logic in his fanaticism. "There are no innocents" was his justification of his deed, a remark that may or may not seem less outrageous when we realize that it is logically equivalent to the more familiar claim that "we are all guilty."

The future French premier Georges Clemenceau witnessed Henry on the scaffold, "like a vision of Christ, his face terribly pale but implacable. His ghastly expression hypnotized me. I could look at nothing else. He looked around, and then, opening his mouth horribly, forced convulsively out in a hoarse but strong voice, 'Courage, comrades, Long live Anarchy!' "

Artists and writers were sometimes among the apologists for anarchist outrages, finding in them a more emphatic and heroic expression of their own hatred for bourgeois society, or perhaps seeing in violence for violence's sake a kind of echo of the fashionable aesthetic creed of art for art's sake. "What do the victims matter," the French poet Laurent Tailhade was quoted as saying, "provided the gesture is fine?" His comment when he himself subsequently lost an eye in an anarchist explosion is not recorded. Executed anarchists like Ravachol, Vaillant, and Henry were celebrated as sacrificial Christs. Among the artists and men of letters who called themselves anarchists or subscribed to the anarchist journal *La Révolte* were Alphonse Daudet, Anatole France, the poet Stéphane Mallarmé, Oscar Wilde, and the painter Camille Pissarro.

Anarchist terrorism left its mark, too, in the novels of the period, in Emile Zola's *Germinal*, Henry James's *The Princess Casamassima*, and Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent*. The last catches with superb irony the claustrophobic squalor and the brutal farce of anarchist terrorism; it is entirely plausible that the instigator of the bomb outrage on which the plot hinges should be a reactionary foreign embassy that wants to discredit the revolutionary emigrant groups in London. In an unforgettable minor character Conrad epitomizes the barrenness and futility of one kind of nihilist "freedom"; no one dares to approach him too closely, because he carries a bomb in his pocket at all times and will not hesitate to blow up both himself and his antagonists; his life is devoted to perfecting the bombs that insulate him from the world.

Anarchist terrorism died down, partly because it became clear that "the propaganda of the deed" was counterproductive, but also because the fortunes of the anarchist movement as a whole began to decline. When the Bolsheviks seized power in Russia in 1917, defying both Marxist theory and nearly half a century of Marxist socialist practice, Revolution gained a base; but it was a Marxist, not an anarchist, one. In the West the depression seemed to raise the hope that the urban industrial workers might revolt, as Marx had said they would. Anarchism had been essentially a protest against the "hypocrisy" of the liberal democracy in which the parliamentary socialist parties had been ensnared. But in Central Europe in the 1930's liberal democracy itself disappeared. In the face of a highly organized and ruthless fascist counterrevolution, it was communist discipline rather than anarchist spontaneity that seemed most needed, as in Spain, where as the Civil War progressed, the anarchists lost ground to the communists.

Today we have a situation more like that of the late nineteenth century. The Western Communist parties, as in France recently, are again behaving more like the Marxists before 1914, as parties of legality and "order." The resurgence of the politics of rural brigandage, in the cult of Che Guevara, is hardly surprising. There has been no revival of the anarchist policy of assassination, but slums still breed men of the type of Ravachol and Czolgosz, men like Lee Harvey Oswald.

Again, the anarchist protest is as much against bureaucracy as it is against capitalism. In a world that seems increasingly to be divided into a minority of technocrats and experts on the one hand and a possibly prosperous but passive majority on the other, the anarchist call for decentralization and participation may well seem more relevant than socialist "welfare" handouts or Marxist state control of the economy. "We are enemies," Bakunin wrote prophetically, "not only of religious priests but also of the priests of science." To the young who repudiate the authority of any elite or hierarchy whatever, Bakunin and Proudhon are mentors closer in spirit than is Marx, whether they realize it or not. When the black flag of anarchism has appeared occasionally at student demonstrations, as it did at the Sorbonne a year ago last May, it has seemed an apter symbol than the red Communist flag, which has usually accompanied it.

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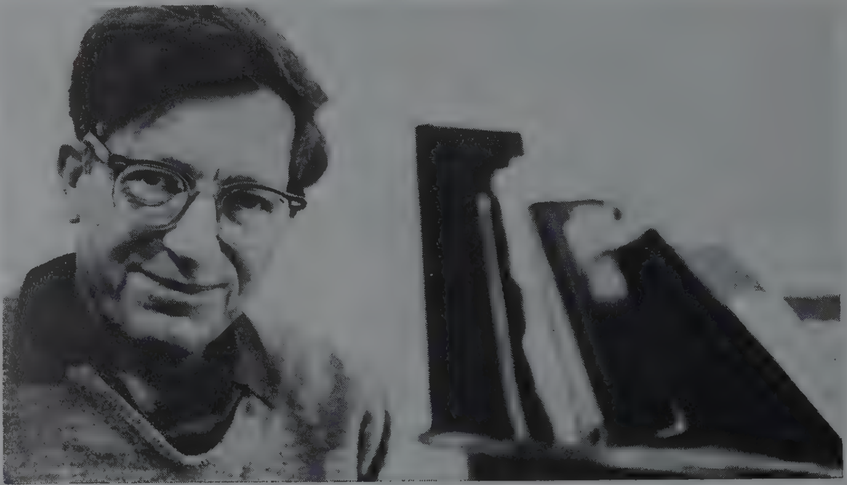
*J. W. Burrow, who is a professor at the University of East Anglia in England, wrote "The Many Faces of Karl Marx" for the Winter, 1969,* HORIZON.

UPI

*Tom Hayden* *Abbie Hoffman* *Rennie Davis*

PETER MOORE



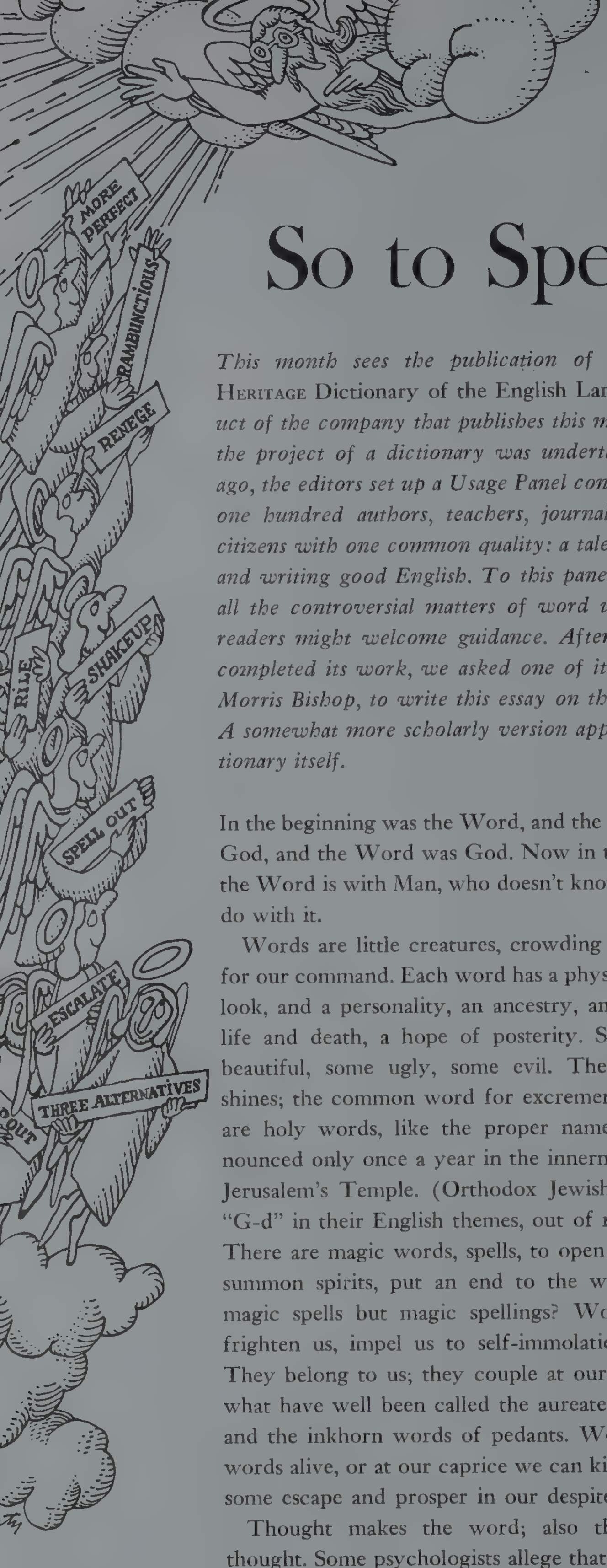
*Paul Goodman*

UPI CAMERAPHOTO

*Danny the Red*

*Contemporary figures who have been called anarchists include the three at top, who were among the leaders of the 1968 Chicago demonstrations; social critic Paul Goodman; and Daniel Cohn-Bendit (called "the Red" because of his hair color), who is shown in the grasp of a policeman at Frankfurt. Opposite, young Paris rebels wave the black flag of anarchism during their revolt in May, 1968.*

PARIS MATCH—PICTORIAL PARA



# So to Speak

By MORRIS BISHOP

*This month sees the publication of the* American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, *a product of the company that publishes this magazine. When the project of a dictionary was undertaken five years ago, the editors set up a Usage Panel consisting of about one hundred authors, teachers, journalists, and other citizens with one common quality: a talent for speaking and writing good English. To this panel were referred all the controversial matters of word usage on which readers might welcome guidance. After the panel had completed its work, we asked one of its members, Dr. Morris Bishop, to write this essay on the use of words. A somewhat more scholarly version appears in the dictionary itself.*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Now in these latter days the Word is with Man, who doesn't know quite what to do with it.

Words are little creatures, crowding about us, eager for our command. Each word has a physical character, a look, and a personality, an ancestry, an expectation of life and death, a hope of posterity. Some words are beautiful, some ugly, some evil. The word "glory" shines; the common word for excrement smells. There are holy words, like the proper name of God, pronounced only once a year in the innermost chamber of Jerusalem's Temple. (Orthodox Jewish students write "G-d" in their English themes, out of respect or fear.) There are magic words, spells, to open gates and safes, summon spirits, put an end to the world. What are magic spells but magic spellings? Words sing to us, frighten us, impel us to self-immolation and murder. They belong to us; they couple at our order, to make what have well been called the aureate words of poets and the inkhorn words of pedants. We can keep dear words alive, or at our caprice we can kill them—though some escape and prosper in our despite.

Thought makes the word; also the word makes thought. Some psychologists allege that explicit thought does not exist without verbalization. Thought, they say, emerges from our silent secret speech, from the tiny quivers of the speech organs, from the interior monologue we all carry on endlessly. Let us pause a moment and reflect on our thought; we reflect, in words, on a surge of hurrying words. This hidden turmoil of words is called endophasic speech.

Much of our formless secret thought is, to be sure, idiotic. Before we permit endophasic speech to emerge as spoken words, we must arrange it in patterns of sense and form, accessible to other people. These patterns, this ordered behavior of words, are usage. And usage is the ruler, the governor, the judge of language. Horace said it in his *Ars Poetica: "usus, / Quem penes arbitrium / est, et jus, et norma loquendi."* Or, in the old translation of the passage:

"Yes, words long faded may again revive;
And words may fade now blooming and alive,
If usage wills it so, to whom belongs
The rule and law, the government of tongues."

Deferring to the rule and law of usage, we may yet order words well or ill, thus creating Good Usage and Bad Usage.

Now the trouble begins. Whose usage is good, whose bad? Is not my usage good for me? Do you have authority over my usage? Does anyone have authority? And if authority exists, is it helpful or hurtful to usage?

We demand freedom for our own usage, authority for others. And we are not above seeking comfort and support from authority. One of our commonest phrases is "look it up in the dictionary." (Not any particular dictionary; just "the dictionary.") Every law court has its big dictionary; the law settles cases, awards millions, rates crimes and misdemeanors, by quoting the definitions of some poor attic lexicographer, "a harmless drudge," as defined by the lexicographer Samuel Johnson. We acclaim freedom, but we love the word "freedom" more than the fact. Most people most of the time would rather be secure than free; they cry for law and order. We know the menaces of freedom. In the matter of usage we know how language may corrupt thought; we know the power of bloody words.

Who, then, shall wield authority? The king, perhaps? The phrase "the king's English" came in, we are told, with Henry VIII, who ruled from 1509 to 1547. He was a poet and a man of letters when he had the time. The king's English remained standard, even under George I, who could not speak English. Recent kings and queens of England have not been noteworthy for an exemplary style. The only royal phrasing that comes to mind is Edward VIII's "At long last . . . the woman I love." In America the President's English has never ruled the citizenry. One notorious presidential venture into lexicography was Harding's approbation of "normalcy." But he said that he had looked it up in the dictionary.

The king's English was naturally identified with the spoken style of gentlemen and ladies of the English court. Similarly in France the grammarian Vaugelas in 1647 defined good usage as the speech habits of the sounder members of the court, in conformity with the practice in writing of the sounder contemporary authors. Good usage, then, would represent the practice of an elite, of breeding, station, and intellect. This contention has been taken as an axiom until very recent times.

The idea of an elite with authority over language clearly needed delimitation. In France Cardinal Richelieu, who piqued himself on his style in verse and prose, authorized in 1635 the formation of an *Académie française*, composed of writers, bookish nobles and magistrates, and amateurs of letters. The *Académie*, the Supreme Court of the French literary world, set itself the task of preparing a dictionary. It has been working at its dictionary, off and on, for more than three hundred years.

Lacking an academy, Englishmen appealed to the usage of good writers to preserve, or fix, general usage. Thence more trouble. Who are the good writers? Shakespeare, no doubt. But Shakespeare, with his wild and carefree coinages, his cheery disregard for grammatical agreements, demands our admiration, not our imitation. The King James Bible? It is inspired, yea verily, but thou wouldst not follow inspired usage, wouldst thou? In Latin, a fossilized tongue, the rule is simple: if a locution is in Cicero, it is correct. In English we have no Cicero. The only writers whom all critics would accept as "best" have been dead for such a long time that their works are uncertain models for the living language of our times.

We should, perhaps, make the authority of the best writers defer to that of professional judges of language, the critics and grammarians. Quintilian, a rhetorician of the first century A.D., appealed to the consensus of the *eruditi*. Ben Jonson said: "Custom is the most certain mistress of language, as the public stamp makes the current money. . . . That I call custom of speech, which is the consent of the learned; as custom of life, which is the consent of the good." In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the English grammarians appeared, devoting themselves to "refining, ascertaining, and fixing" the language. They were scholars; aware of linguistic history, they conceived of English usage as a development from primitive barbarism to the harmonious perfection of their own times. They regarded the past as a preparation, the present as a glorious achievement, the future as a threatening decadence. Jonathan Swift was terrified of the coming corruption and invoked governmental authority to fix the language; else, he feared, within two centuries the literary works of his time, including his own, would be unreadable and unread.

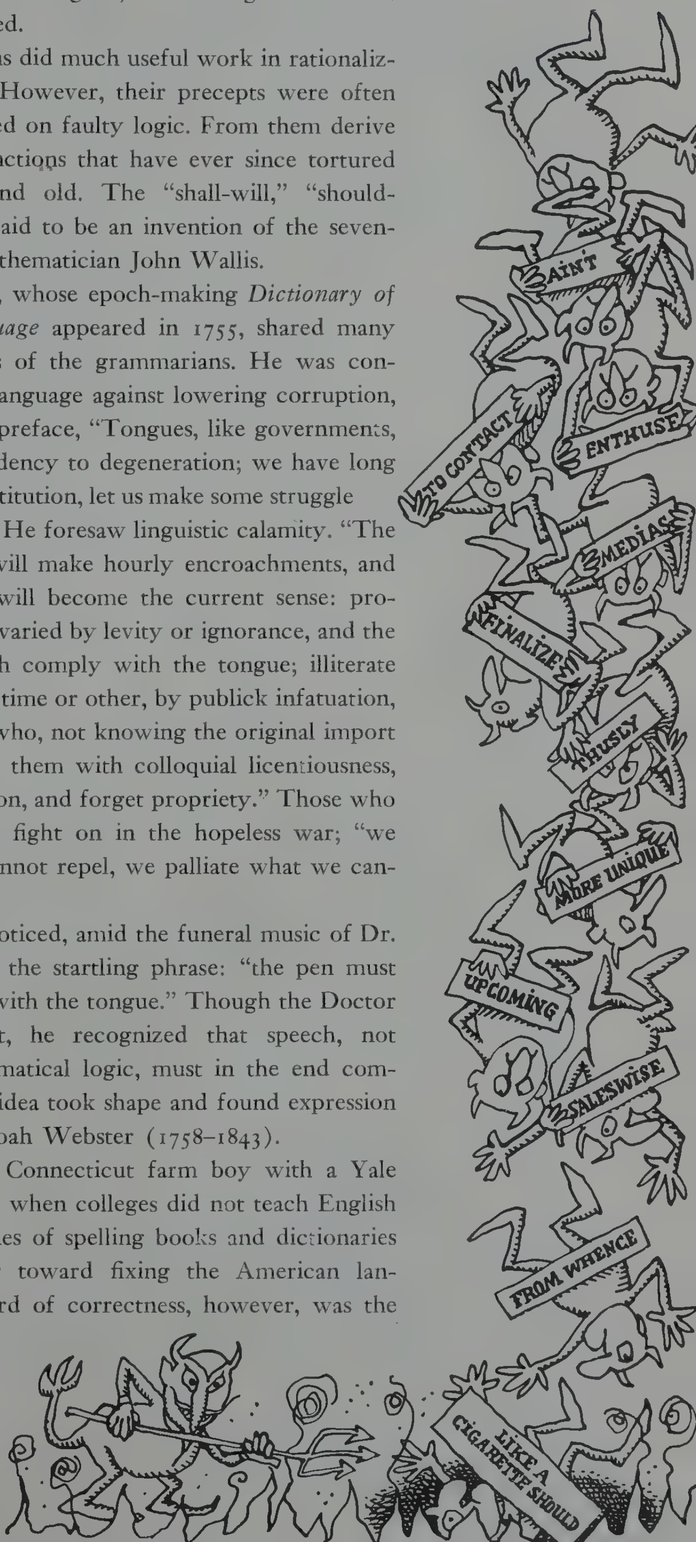
The grammarians justified their judgments by appealing not only to history but to reason. They strengthened the concepts Good and Bad to become Right and Wrong. They regarded language as something existing mysteriously apart from man, governed by a universal grammar waiting to be discovered by intrepid scholars. No doubt they were sympathetically fascinated by the story Herodotus tells of the king who isolated two small children with a deaf-and-dumb shepherd to find out what language they would learn to speak (it was Phrygian) thus to identify the original speech of mankind. Rightness was to be achieved by logical analysis of form and meaning, with much use of analogy. Popular usage was scouted, as of its nature corrupt. The grammarians made great play with purity and impurity. Pure English lived in perpetual danger of defloration by the impure. But purity, alas, has now been undone; the very word is uttered with a smile. The Society for Pure English, after a long and brilliant career, has collapsed.

The grammarians did much useful work in rationalizing the language. However, their precepts were often overlogical or based on faulty logic. From them derive many of the distinctions that have ever since tortured scholars young and old. The "shall-will," "should-would" rules are said to be an invention of the seventeenth-century mathematician John Wallis.

Samuel Johnson, whose epoch-making *Dictionary of the English Language* appeared in 1755, shared many of the convictions of the grammarians. He was concerned to fix the language against lowering corruption, for, he said in his preface, "Tongues, like governments, have a natural tendency to degeneration; we have long preserved our constitution, let us make some struggle for our language." He foresaw linguistic calamity. "The tropes of poetry will make hourly encroachments, and the metaphorical will become the current sense: pronunciation will be varied by levity or ignorance, and the pen must at length comply with the tongue; illiterate writers will at one time or other, by publick infatuation, rise into renown, who, not knowing the original import of words, will use them with colloquial licentiousness, confound distinction, and forget propriety." Those who know better must fight on in the hopeless war; "we retard what we cannot repel, we palliate what we cannot cure."

One will have noticed, amid the funeral music of Dr. Johnson's preface, the startling phrase: "the pen must at length comply with the tongue." Though the Doctor deplored the fact, he recognized that speech, not writers, not grammatical logic, must in the end command usage. This idea took shape and found expression in the work of Noah Webster (1758–1843).

Webster was a Connecticut farm boy with a Yale education in a day when colleges did not teach English in course. His series of spelling books and dictionaries actually went far toward fixing the American language. His standard of correctness, however, was the



usage of the enlightened members of each community, not that of the "polite part" of city society, which, he believed, consisted largely of coxcombs. "General custom must be the rule of speaking," he said; and "it is always better to be *vulgarly* right than *politely* wrong." He was astonishingly liberal, even radical, in his acceptance of popular usage, giving his approval to "it is me," "who she is married to," and "them horses."

Thus common usage began to assume dominance at the expense of formal grammar. The scholarly Irish archbishop Richard C. Trench in 1857 defined a dictionary as an inventory of the language, a historical monument. "It is no task of the maker of it to select the *good* words of a language. . . . He is an historian of it, not a critic."

This view of language and its use prevailed in the twentieth century. A school of linguistic scientists constituted itself, and in time it found a place on most college faculties, ousting the old-fashioned philologists of the English and foreign language departments. The descriptive, or structural, linguists applied the procedures of science to language, which they would no more criticize than a physicist would criticize an atom or an entomologist a cockroach.

These are the five principles of structural, or descriptive, linguistics: (1) language changes constantly; (2) change is normal; (3) spoken language is *the* language; (4) correctness rests upon usage; (5) all usage is relative.* Speech is no miracle; it is merely a set of noises you make with your face. The written word came late in time and is insignificant in comparison with the spoken language. The written language is just a set of marks you make with your fist. In language there is no such thing as good and bad, better or worse. Anything is "correct" that is acceptable in a given social group. Nothing is "incorrect," for an error becomes correct by the mere fact of its use. Lexicography, then, must be merely descriptive, not prescriptive.

The underlying assumption is that language, by its very nature, is a growing, evolving thing; and that whereas it may be cultivated, one cannot fix it without killing it. Like any other fundamental social activity, it will undergo vicissitudes that to the older generation often seem regrettable. And indeed, some changes in language turn out to be empty fads that are soon forgotten, like some changes in women's fashions. Others are found to be enduringly useful, so that a generation later it becomes hard to imagine how we got along without them.

The lesson that the linguists draw, or that others draw from their practice, is that any comprehensible locution is OK, that any spelling in general use is alrite. Only silly purists could object to a nite-club, for a nite-club is more like a nite-club than a night club could be. Anyway, a nite-club does not cater to purists.

A linguists' lexicon refrains, then, from value judgments, from imposed pronunciations and spellings. It classifies usages as standard or substandard, not right or wrong. At most it recommends, it does not command. And the looker-up is likely to turn away uncounseled and uncomforted.

The makers of the AMERICAN HERITAGE *Dictionary*, profiting much by the linguists' researches, have not adopted their doctrines entire. They accept usage as the authority for correctness, but they believe that good usage may be distinguished from bad usage. They maintain that those best fitted to make such distinctions are, as Noah Webster said, the enlightened members of the community, not the scholarly theoreticians, not the instinctive verbalizers of the unlettered mass. The best authorities are those practicing writers who have demonstrated their sensitivity to the language and their power to wield it effectively and beautifully.

The editors therefore constituted a Usage Panel made up of novelists, essayists, poets, journalists, writers on science and sports, public officials, professors. The members of the panel have in common only a recognized ability to write good English. They are not, with one exception, grammarians; they represent roughly Quintilian's consensus of the well-informed, Vaugelas's sounder members of the courtly world, T. R. Lounsbury's "the intellectually good."

The usage panelists accepted their task and turned to it with gusto. They revealed, often with passion, their likes and dislikes, their principles and also their whims and crotchets.

On specific questions put to them they disagreed more than they agreed. In only one case did they register 100 per cent—in disfavor of "simultaneous" as an adverb ("the referendum was conducted simultaneous with the election"). Other scores approached unanimity, as in the following:

| EXPRESSION | APPROVED BY | DISAPPROVED BY |
|---|---|---|
| "ain't I?" in writing | | 99% |
| "between you and I" in writing | | 99% |
| "dropout" used as a noun | 97% | |
| "thusly" | | 97% |
| "debut" as a verb ("the company will debut its new models") | | 97% |
| "slow" as an adverb ("drive slow") | 96% | |
| "medias" as a plural (instead of "media") | | 95% |
| "their own" referring to the singular ("nobody thinks the criticism applies to their own work") | | 95% |
| "but what" ("there is no doubt but what he will try") | | 95% |
| "myself" instead of "me" in compound objects, in writing ("he invited Mary and myself to dinner") | | 95% |
| "anxious" in the sense of "eager" | 94% | |
| "type" for "type of" ("that type shrub") | | 94% |
| "rather unique"; "most unique" | | 94% |

On the whole, the panelists tend toward conservatism, while avoiding overniceness, prissiness. ("Was graduated," says John Bainbridge, is used "by all who write with a quill pen.") Sixty-one per cent of them feel bad about the expression "I feel badly" when they see it in writing; only 45 per cent object when they hear it in speech. Whereas "most unique" was condemned by 94 per cent, "more perfect" was condoned by 65 per cent. More than most people, the panelists know the history of words and have tested the value of idioms. More than most, they have grown tired of overused vogue-words. They dislike "senior citizen" ("I'd as soon use 'underprivileged' for 'poor'—or any other social science Choctaw"—Berton Roueché). "Enthuse" finds little favor; "By God, let's hold the line on this one!" cries Dwight Macdonald. " 'Finalize,' " says Isaac Asimov, "is nothing more than bureaucratic illiteracy." Critics of the critics might rejoin that we have no exact synonyms for "enthuse" and "finalize," that the words are full of life and power.

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*See "Who is Behind the Assault on English," by Lincoln Barnett, July, 1963.

The panelists are not opposed to all neologisms; they distinguish between the useless, pretentious coinage, such as "commentate," and the creative effort to find a word for an unnamed concept or thing. Lewis Mumford says: "My principle of judgment is to refuse a variant (often vague) when the existing word gives the same meaning . . . I hold that 'meticulous,' by its very sound, indicates an exact, indeed fussy, care that 'careful' does not." And Gilbert Highet: "I have great admiration for the American genius for creating short vivid words (often disyllabic) to express complex ideas: e.g., a collision between a vehicle and another object which is not direct but lateral or oblique, 'sideswipe.' So recently economists talk of the 'takeoff point' in a developing economy."

In general the jurymen are more cordial toward popular, low-level coinages than toward the pomposities of professional jargons. John K. Sherman welcomes "rambunctious" and "rile" as "tangy Americanisms." No one, however, likes business English. The panelists betray a particular spite against advertisese and against Madison Avenue, once a very respectable street, now an avenue of ill fame. Does this spite reveal a professional jealousy? The advertisers are, after all, fecund creators languagewise.

The panelists are more attentive to the practice of their social group than to grammatical logic. They are antipedantic, scornful of the grammarians' effort to ban "it's me." Some (as Theodore C. Sorenson) would throw away the silly rule that the relative "that" must introduce restrictive clauses, "which" nonrestrictive. Dwight Macdonald would drop "whom" altogether, as a needless refinement. John Ciardi, accepting "alternative" as a term applied to more than two choices: "Language abhors a vacuum and English leaves one at this point." Ninety-one per cent of the panelists accept the use of "internecine" to mean "pertaining to civil war or to a struggle within a family, group, organization, nation, or the like." They know, of course, that the Latin *internecinus* just means mutually deadly, but they do not seem to care.

The group is (or are, if you prefer) merciless toward flagrant common errors. Isaac Asimov regards as nauseous those who say "nauseous" when they mean "nauseated." Of "flaunt" for "flout" Walter W. ("Red") Smith writes: "He who flouts grammar flaunts his ignorance. Clout the lout with a knout." Robert Saudek on the use of "bimonthly" in the sense of "semimonthly" says: "No more than I would allow 'double' to mean 'half.' " And summing up, Alistair Cooke well says: "An accumulation of tiny accuracies gives muscle; an accumulation of tiny inaccuracies produces fat."

The panelists have given us the enlightened judgments on usage of a cultivated elite. Their choices represent their own long efforts for precision, reasonableness, and beauty in manipulating English. They are suspicious of innovation. They would presumably reject as barbarisms such useful words as "tenderize," "hospitalize," "roadability." The word "panelist" itself is a new creation that might be called a barbarism. Even the learned scholars are not above making words at need. "Advisee" is standard on our campuses, "tutee" at Harvard.

Our committeemen do not venture beyond their assigned tasks in order to explore the psychology of speech, the mysteries of language. They assume that usage should be clear and cogent, that a brief exact statement is superior to blurry repetitiousness. They are not concerned that most of our speech and much of our writing is time-killing, social noise, "random clucking" that, according to the animal behaviorists, merely reassures the flock of our continuing life and well-being. Even a business letter is likely to be more affective than rational. Should a dun consist merely of the message: "Pay by June 17, or else—"? Indeed no; it should contain a paragraph of apology, a paragraph of summons to pay, and a paragraph of threats ending in expressions of esteem. The recipient expects, and is entitled to, a certain amount of random clucking.

Again, the panelists do not deal with the rhythmical elements of usage. In our casual speech, as in our writing, we make constant choices for euphony, not for significance. In the army we used to feel a subtle dissatisfaction with "Pass the beans" (—◡—; a thumping amphimacer). We therefore said commonly: "Pass the goddamn beans" (—◡◡◡—; a paeon primus plus a long). No derogation of the beans was intended; on the contrary, the sentence was merely a polite formula, rhythmically determined.

Nor, finally, do the panelists examine the moral element in usage. Uttering wicked words promotes wickedness; dwelling with pure words makes for purity. Religious ritual uplifts the spirit by the quality of the language; radio commercials degrade. "To use the word gentleman correctly, be one," said Ambrose Bierce. But such themes for reflection lie beyond the scope of the panel's inquiries.

Within their field, the determination of good current usage, the counselors found no absolute standard of rightness. Though naturally believing in their own superiority, they assume no authority. Nor do they accept the authority of others. They bow to no book, least of all to a dictionary. They seem to conclude, without explicit statement, that usage is our own affair. Let that be our conclusion. The duty of determination falls upon us all. By our choices we make usage, good or bad. Let us then try to make good choices, and guard and praise our lovely language and try to be worthy of her.

WEBSTERS DICTIONARY
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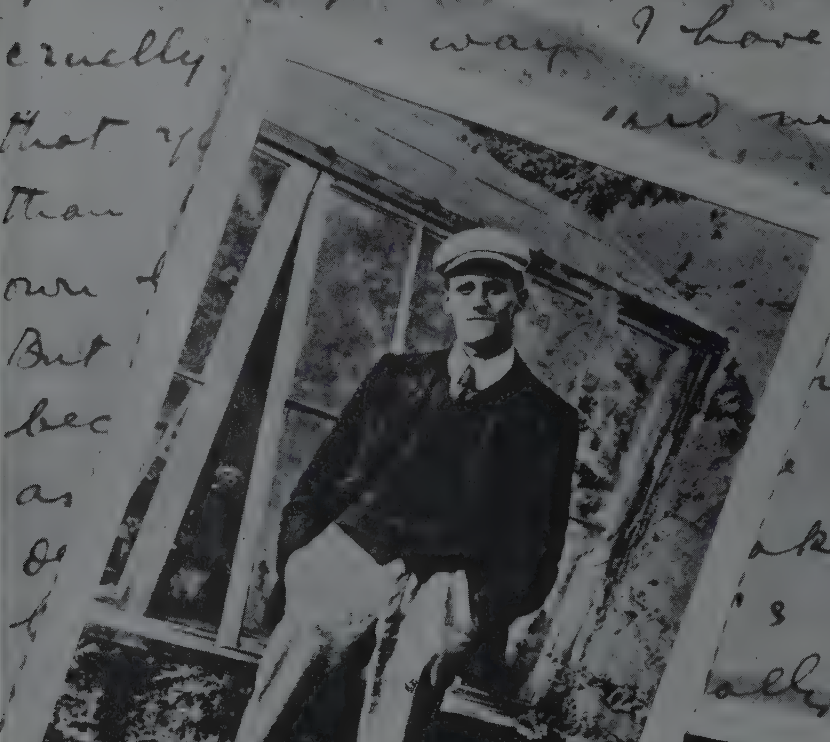
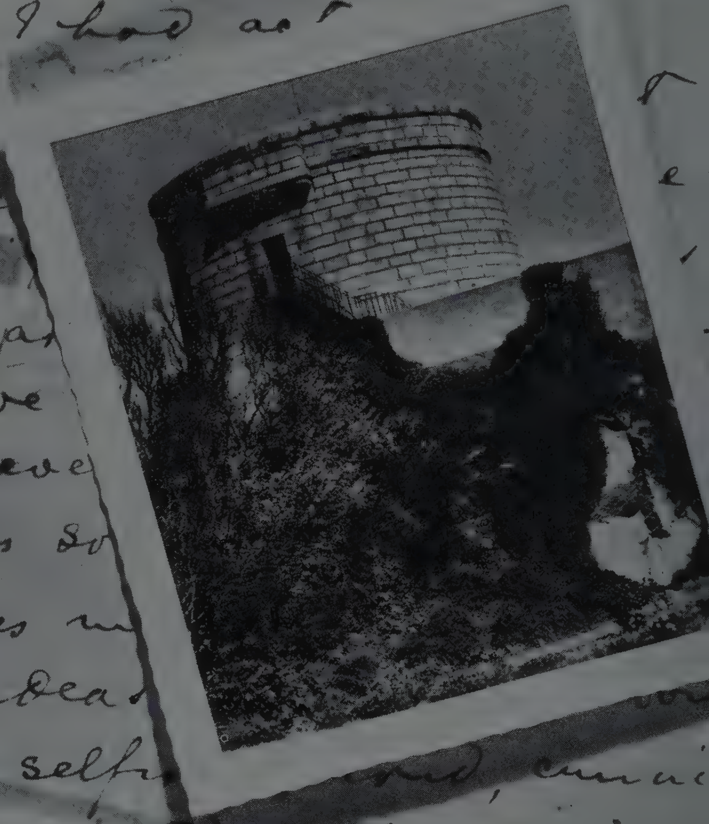
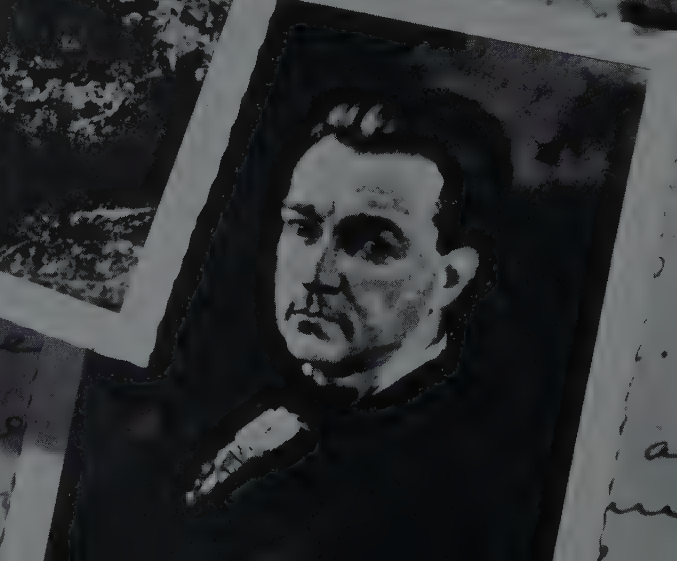
THE TOWER,
SANDYCOVE.

My dear, dear Nora

I suppose you have been very
much upset since last night. I will not speak
of myself for I feel as if I had act
cruelly. way. I have
and me
that y
than
own
But ave
bec neve
as e is so
O akes m
's idea
ally selfi , cunni
y that my
rding to wha
have given
you so not see how
could have . I wrote you a
long letter as I could how
felt that med to me tha







# Ulysses' Tower

In 1904 two Irish bachelors set up housekeeping in an old fort near Dublin. One of them gave their boisterous sojourn there a fame that the other did not relish

When I went to Ireland after leaving the army in 1946, I spent September and October of that year in a ramshackle Regency cottage on Trident Terrace in Sandycove, some eight miles from Dublin. Each morning as I looked out my bedroom window I could see the bulk of a Martello tower fifty yards away, usually gray and glistening in the rain. It looked inconspicuous enough, yet I don't suppose there has been such a formidable stone cylinder in English literature since Childe Roland came to his dark tower. For this was the tower James Joyce conjured up in the first chapter of *Ulysses*, as it was on the morning of June 16, 1904. Although that angry young man, Stephen Dedalus, and the "stately, plump Buck Mulligan" had taken fictional possession of their tower in June, Joyce and the gaily outrageous Oliver St. John Gogarty—whom he was to impale two decades later as Mulligan—did not move into the actual Sandycove tower until the latter part of the summer. If the diary of Joyce's brother Stanislaus is correct, the whole tower episode lasted only from September 9, 1904, to the night of September 19, when Joyce walked out in a huff into the rain. But from Gogarty's memoirs and the accounts of various visitors it appears that they kept their fortified bachelors' quarters for several months.

The squat tower—now a museum—still looms above Sandycove's seaside villas, its mortar and masonry as solid as when it was built. There is a medieval aspect to its rounded granite, as if it were as surrounded by legend as Yeats's Galway keep, Thoor Ballylee. Actually it is relatively modern. Such Martello towers were set out early in the nineteenth century as links in a Fortress Britannia against the threat of Napoleon's invasion. Some of them still remain. At Sandymount, between Sandycove and Dublin, are the broken walls of one near the strand where Joyce's Leopold Bloom took his voyeuristic evening walk.

*From the Sandycove tower on September 10, 1904, Joyce wrote to "dear, dear Nora," then Miss Barnacle, later Mrs. Joyce. Superimposed on the letter are a photograph of Joyce taken the same year, a portrait of the elegant Oliver Gogarty, and the tower they rented.*

[illegible] REPRESENTING ESTATE OF JAMES JOYCE—MENNEN COLL., CORNELL UNIV. LIB.

"Martello" is a corruption of Cape Mortello in Corsica. In 1794 the British navy attacked the cape and only with much difficulty captured the stone tower that was its key defense. So impressed were the admirals by the way this tower withstood naval bombardment that they decided to construct similar ones along the British coast.

Although the Martello towers were massive, with walls eight feet thick, an entrance ten feet aboveground (reached by ladder), and the narrowest of embrasures, their plan was simple. Below ground level was a copper-lined storage room for gunpowder. Above it was a large elliptical room that served as living quarters, dimly lighted by two slanting apertures. The roof, reached by an interior stair, was enclosed by a stone parapet. In the center stood a gun rest. The keys to the enormous door locks were all made of copper to protect the powder from any chance sparks struck by steel. In *Ulysses* it was just this kind of key that Buck Mulligan laid on his pile of clothes at the Forty Foot before going swimming.

From the roof of the Sandycove tower there is a tremendous windy view up and down the Irish coast. The old Kingstown breakwater divides the bay in the foreground, while across several miles of glaucous water there is the unexpected bulk of Howth Head with the Bailey Light. Just below the tower are bathing beaches and the cleft in the cliff that forms the diving pool (for men only) still known as the Forty Foot. Here, in the first chapter of *Ulysses,* Stephen Dedalus turned away while the boisterous Mulligan plunged and swam with seal-like sleekness.

It was Joyce who first conceived the idea of living in the tower, although only Gogarty had the means to pay the rent. Joyce was then twenty-two, on the threshold of the exile that was to mold his life. He had his degree from Royal (now National) University, he had toyed with the idea of studying medicine, and had even gone to Paris briefly with this in mind. Then he had returned to his dying mother's bedside, and after her death he drank and drifted as far as his poverty would allow. Leaving the jangling dissension of his impoverished home, he stayed for a time in a lodging house on Shelbourne Road. His evenings he spent roistering with medical students. In his idle daylight hours he made no effort to find a job, but wrote spasmodically. He had composed most of the delicate, mannered verses that would later form his first thin book, *Chamber Music*. He had written several of the short stories of his *Dubliners* collection. Closest to his heart and pride was the autobiographical novel *Stephen Hero* that he was slowly evolving and that was to be his vindication and his triumph. "I want to be famous while I am alive," he wrote his aunt. Already he was beginning to envision himself as the Nietzschean superartist. It was at about this time

### *By* FRANCIS RUSSELL

that he wrote the doggerel challenge of "The Holy Office" in which he stood as a literary Lucifer:

> . . . the self-doomed, unafraid,
> Unfellowed, friendless and alone,
> Indifferent as the herring-bone,
> Firm as the mountain ridges where
> I flash my antlers on the air.

It was also at this time in a chance encounter on Nassau Street that he met Nora Barnacle, the young woman—then a maid at Finn's Hotel—who would share his exile and the rest of his life and whom he was to marry a quarter of a century later. At the period of the tower episode he had not made up his mind about her.

Gogarty, several years older than Joyce, was then back from Oxford, where he had concluded his medical studies begun at Trinity College, Dublin. He was now reading for a degree. During his first Trinity days he had met Joyce casually in the National Library and had renewed the acquaintance on a tram going to the suburb of Glasnevin. The friendship that developed was a thorny one. Each man was, in his way, jealous of the other. Gogarty sensed and was apprehensive of Joyce's still latent talent. Although they were boon companions in dissipation, Gogarty soon noticed Joyce's habit of slipping away during a conversation to make notes, and he suspected—rightly, as it turned out—that Joyce was planning to pillory him in some future opus. Already Gogarty, in a canary-colored waistcoat with gold buttons, was a bit of a dandy. The lean and sour Joyce, in canvas shoes, threadbare trousers, an old yachting cap, and his inevitable walking stick with the handle at right angles to the shaft, looked a seedy contrast to the debonair young medico.

In 1904 the Sandycove tower was still government property. After Joyce had discovered its availability, Gogarty rented it for a year at £8 from the Secretary of State for War, then furnished it with beds, tables, chairs, and cooking utensils, borrowed from his mother. Even before the lease was signed the two made their first inspection visit, Joyce bearing the ten-inch copper key and a small rolled-up manuscript of his poems. Some years after Joyce's death, Gogarty described how they took possession:

> The door had not been opened for years, so we had some difficulty in getting in. At last the great metal door was opened. We descended a few steps and entered a large circular room. There was a clamor of wings as some pigeons flew up through the embrasures of the little windows. The roof was a strong cylinder of stone. Around the room went a deep shelf at arms' reach. A fireplace was opposite to the door. On the left side we saw a little door and, opening it, discovered a flight of steps in the thickness of the wall. Full of adventure we ascended. What a pleasant discovery! There was a platform of granite and a circular raised wall from which you could see over the battlements head high. There was the Hill of Howth that formed the northern arm of Dublin Bay lying purple in the light. Dublin lay to the west, a dull ruby under a canopy of smoke. The sight fascinated Joyce. For a long time he gazed at his native town, "The Seventh City of Christendom."
>
> I was looking at Killiney Hill, the south guardian of the Bay. I rejoiced at the green, the deep green of the Hill where its cliffs of granite were climbed by pines.
>
> "This will do for a table," Joyce said, pointing to the gun emplacement, "and we can sit in the step and move around with the sun. We can do as much sun-bathing as we wish. Nobody can see us here. We can see everyone when we look over the parapet. . . . We must take possession at once until you get in the furniture. Could you do it today?"
>
> "I thought we had possession. Haven't you got the key?"
>
> Joyce had an uncle who was a clerk in an attorney's office, and from him Joyce got a respect for the formalities of law.
>
> "We must leave something here until we move in."
>
> When we ascended to the living room, very formally Joyce "took possession" by laying his roll of poems on the shelf.

Soon after the two had settled into their fortress "in privacy and profanity" above the bourgeois world, they were joined by an Oxford friend of Gogarty's, Samuel Chenevix Trench—the Haines of *Ulysses*—who had just returned from a canoeing trip through the Irish lakes, rivers, and canals. Trench, from an old Anglo-Irish family, had been converted by the Irish revival into a professional Celt. Like many a convert, he insisted on pushing his new beliefs to extremes, calling himself Diarmuid Trench, speaking in fluent Gaelic (though with an Oxford accent) to every gaping countryman he encountered, and wearing the badge of the Gaelic League in his buttonhole. Joyce detested his pretensions. Nevertheless life went on with surface amiability in the tower that with the renewed smoke of its chimney became the marvel of the neighborhood. Gogarty paid the bills, Joyce stayed on as a dependent with a resentment increased by his lack of alternative. His younger brother Stanislaus, still living at home, noted in his diary: "At present he is staying on sufferance with Gogarty in the tower at Sandycove. Gogarty wants to put Jim out, but he is afraid if Jim made a name some day, it would be remembered against him that though he pretended to be a Bohemian friend of Jim's he put him out."

The tower episode ended with unexpected abruptness. Trench, who when he had been drinking suffered from nightmares, woke one night screaming about a black panther and then, still half-asleep, seized a revolver he had near him and fired two or three shots toward the grate. Joyce, always fearful of sharp noises, sat up on his elbow in alarm. Gogarty got up and quietly took away the revolver. Soon afterward Trench began to scream again that he saw the panther in the room. "Leave him to me!" Gogarty called out. He picked up the revolver and fired at a row of pots and pans on the shelf over Joyce's bed. These came crashing down on the terrified Joyce, who, as soon as he could collect himself, dressed, took his walking stick, and left the tower forever.

Leaving the tower was in a sense symbolic of Joyce's leaving Ireland—for the years of poverty and obscure struggle on the Continent, for the artistic goal he had promised himself, for notoriety, and finally for the fame he had wanted while he was still alive. Probably what Gogarty came to regret most in his life was that casual association in the Martello tower in the autumn of 1904. "Well charged with diary of an evening's dissipation in Dublin," he wrote in his autobiographical *As I Was Going Down Sackville Street*, "Ulysses could relax from listening to his companions' talk. But he sat on any resentment he bore by assuring himself that he would crucify us all in due course." Once when Gogarty with playful suspicion taxed Joyce with planning to include him in some modern *Inferno*, Joyce replied archly that he would treat him with fairness.

Envy was the driving force behind Joyce's portrayal of Buck Mulligan, as it was the motivation for his exile and for his repudiation of Dublin. Joyce was angry at life, personified by the debonair Mulligan—who, as Gogarty later remarked, was the one cheerful character in that epic. Joyce felt that he had been cheated of his birthright, the birthright of the still-elegant upper-middle-class society in which Gogarty was destined to move easily and whose image Joyce would re-create in the environment of his later Paris days.

In my autumn months in Sandycove in 1946 the tower, empty so far as I could determine since Gogarty left it, remained locked and the parapet inaccessible. Ireland's official attitude to Joyce, the blasphemer, was that he did not exist. *Stephen Hero* had been banned, although not as yet *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. No one had had the urge or the daring to put *Ulysses* to the test of Ireland's peculiar censorship law, by which the board of censors can take action against a book only after receiving a complaint from a citizen who considers it immoral. I remember in 1947 the board finally got around to banning Zola's *Nana* and Knut Hamsun's *Hunger*. But by 1962 Joyce, twenty-one years dead, had become an almost respectable institution in his native land. A Dublin Joyce Society had come into being, and there was talk—though only talk—of setting up a museum in the old Martello tower that had recently been bought by the Dublin architect Michael Scott. Finally John Huston, the American film director, growing tired of Irish talk, gave money enough to set the project going. The tower was damp-proofed, the elliptical room wired for electricity, and the staircase put in safe condition.

Then, on June 16, 1962—the anniversary that Joyce always celebrated as Bloomsday—the renovated tower was officially opened. Sylvia Beach, whose Shakespeare & Co. first published *Ulysses* in Paris in 1922, dedicated the museum to Joyce's memory, with all the available Irish literary figures present. Official Ireland had made its peace with the ghost of Joyce. Not only had the ban been lifted on *Stephen Hero*, but *Ulysses* could be bought at any Catholic book shop. The Irish tourist agencies were even mapping out "Ulysses" tours for those who wanted to follow Bloom's fifty-eight-year-old footsteps through the city.

I visited the tower-museum in the summer that it opened. Official recognition was apparent in the street-corner sign, "To Joyce's Tower." An opulence of white gravel had replaced the weedy path leading up to the skeletal iron stairway entrance. Inside the elliptical room the scored and blackened walls had been whitewashed to an antiseptic whiteness and the derelict grate mended. A solitary attendant was seated behind a counter of Joyce's books, a woman of massive girth and pugnacious jaw who looked as if she had stepped out of an O'Casey play. Two pilgrims from the University of Manchester were talking to her, and the softness of her voice belied her appearance. Pilgrims had been arriving at the rate of a hundred a month.

The museum itself turned out to be rather meager. Under glass cases there were letters, pages of manuscript, first and foreign editions, as well as snapshots of Joyce with Ford Madox Ford, Sylvia Beach, the Irish-American Maecenas John Quinn, Augustus John, and other friends. Joyce portraits by Sean O'Sullivan and Basil Beachson hung on the whitewashed wall. Dominating the room, bronze-green against the whiteness, was Joyce's death mask. Somehow the sardonic quality of the man seemed intensified by the closed eyes, slightly wrinkled at the corners. The thin lips pinched together below the small mustache, and the corners of the mouth turned down slightly in a mocking smile as if he were saying in death, "World, I have made you take me on my own terms!"

I climbed the inner stair to the parapet. It was late in the afternoon as I stood there in the opaque slanting sunlight. Below me the little gardens of Sandycove were bright with marigolds and salvia. Across the bay the Hill of Howth loomed up in all its greenness, and to the left Dublin lay enveloped in its smoky haze. Even as I watched, the red-and-black-funneled mail boat pulled away from the pier at Dun Laoghaire that was Kingstown when Joyce and Gogarty had watched the incoming boat on that 1904 morning. The day that Joyce had tried so hard to capture with words had vanished irretrievably, and Joyce himself was dead these two decades. In the golden-moted light I could feel the reverse irony of it. My here and now, this immediacy—the sunlight on the tower, the wind-borne pungent scent of bladder wrack, the mail boat picking up speed—the tangibility of the moment as it slipped through my fingers, as it once slipped through Joyce's fingers, could be recalled but never recaptured.

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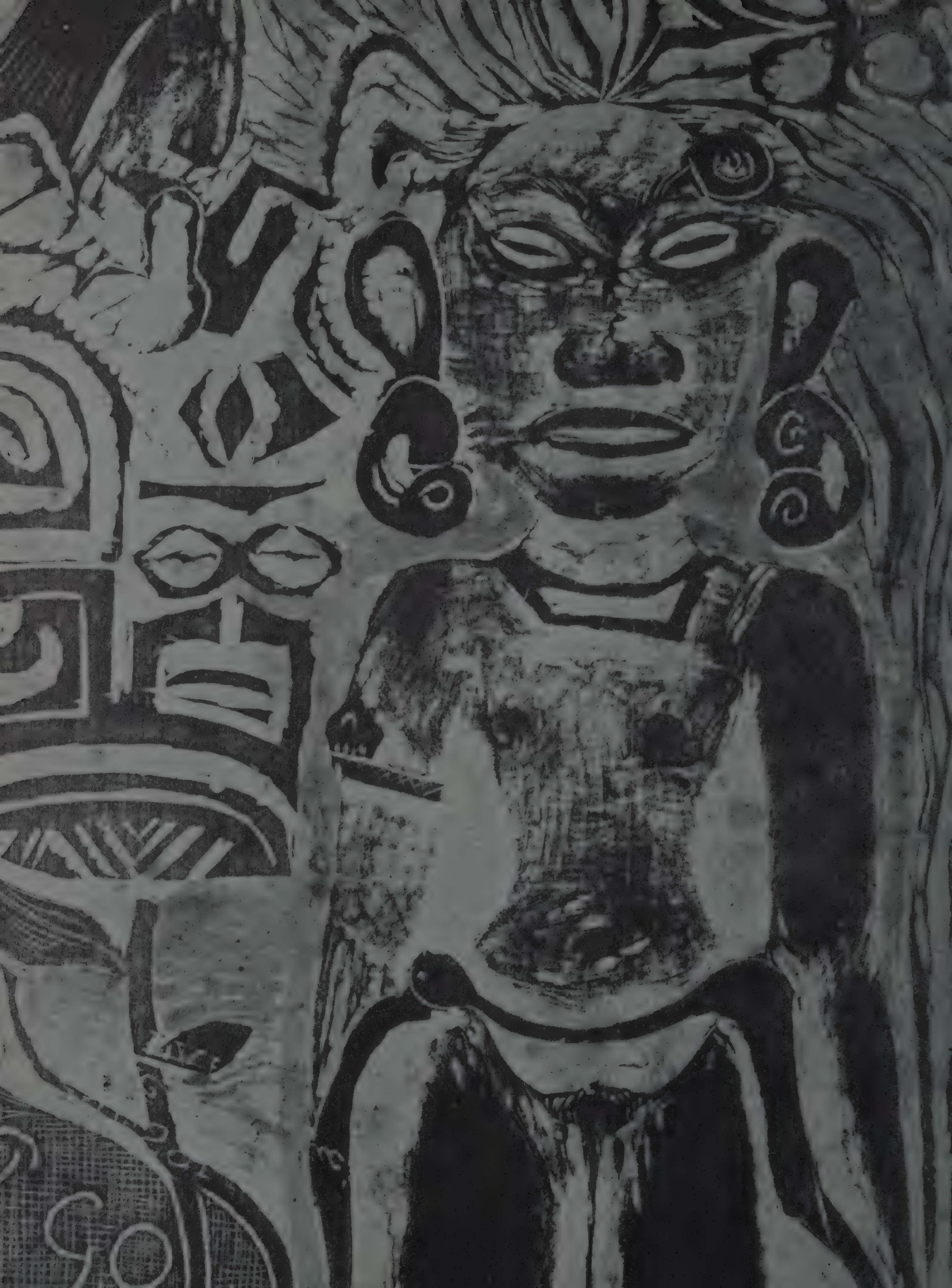
*Francis Russell is a frequent contributor to* HORIZON. *His most recent book is* The Shadow of Blooming Grove, Warren G. Harding in His Times, *a Book-of-the-Month Club selection last year.*



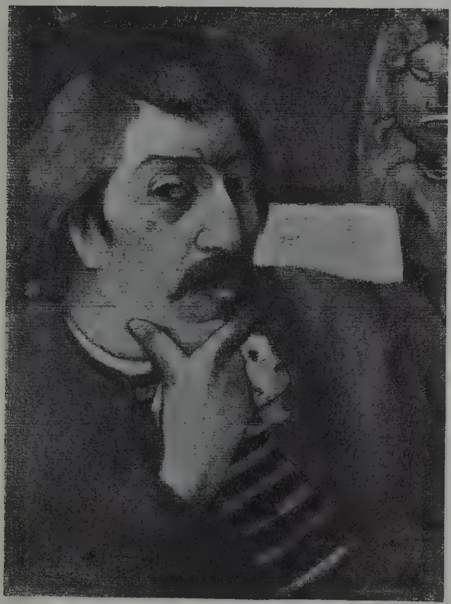
# "Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?"

Having presented the questions so handsomely—in his greatest painting —it hardly seems to matter that Paul Gauguin had none of the answers

"Awakening with my work finished, I say to myself, *Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?* A thought which no longer has anything to do with the canvas, expressed in words quite apart on the wall which surrounds it. Not a title, but a signature . . ." Thus did Paul Gauguin reply to a critic who had complained that there was nothing in the painter's magnum opus and "spiritual testament" that "explains the meaning of the allegory."

To look for allegorical meanings in Gauguin's greatest work is to embark on a fool's errand, but to accept his statement about it without question would be just as naïve. Gauguin's implication that his title was a mere afterthought is somewhat hard to swallow in the light of events leading up to and immediately following the execution of the painting. Biographical data may be irrelevant to the appreciation of a work of art but not necessarily to a fuller understanding of it. Knowing nothing of its genesis—or even of its content—we can still admire the organization of color, line, and pattern in *Where Do We Come From?* and still marvel at its glowing tropical light. But a nagging question remains: what is it, exactly, that we are looking at? And that question is best answered by asking, where did *Gauguin* come from? What was *he*? Where was *he* going?

*Gauguin did this woodcut of a Tahitian idol just after his first sojourn to the Pacific.*



MARION KOOGLER MC NAY ART INSTITUTE

*Paul Gauguin, a self-portrait*

By the time Gauguin decided, belatedly and irrevocably, to devote his life to art, the most controversial innovation in the history of painting, impressionism, had won a measure of acceptance. The disturbance that it once caused now seems altogether disproportionate to the little radicalism the style really embodied. The much-misunderstood aim of impressionism was the achievement of a more credible realism, and the adherents of the style were more concerned with evolution than revolution.

Gauguin's was another story. After a brief flirtation with impressionism (which he later dismissed as a search "centered in the eye and not in the mysterious midriff of the mind") he began to grope toward what he called a "synthesis" of "form and color"—an idea that was then in the air and that soon was to crystallize in the artist Maurice Denis's definition of a painting as "a flat surface covered with colors arranged in a certain order." The notion was truly a revolutionary one; after having confused itself with sculpture for centuries, painting was about to reassume its own identity as a two-dimensional art. If Paul Gauguin was not the sole inventor of the concept, his Tahitian canvases were its most persuasive argument. When they were first seen in Europe, they were, in the artist's words, "held to be incomprehensible" by all but a few of his more perceptive critics. The lack of comprehension is understandable enough; in the course of a few short

*By* JAY JACOBS

years, and largely through the efforts of a single man, painting had undergone a complete metamorphosis. It would never again be quite the same.

If Gauguin's immediate contemporaries found his colors bizarre, his drawing crude, and his forms flat and unconvincing, it was because they were not yet able to concede that paintings could exist on their own terms, independent of both external reality and established conventions. Curiously, however, no such hesitation seems to have impeded public acceptance of the *content* of Gauguin's pictures, which were taken to be literal illustrations of Tahitian life and mythology. Although he steadfastly insisted in his more candid moments that his Tahitian paintings "delineated" only what was "vaguest and most universal in nature," posterity has chosen to see the particular in the universal and to cast its image of Tahiti in Gauguin's mold.

During the years since Gauguin's death in 1903 a lot has been learned about the indigenous arts of the South Pacific that was not known in his time. We now know, for example, that the enormous idols dominating such pictures as *The Feast of Hina* and *Where Do We Come From?* (see foldout) and the woodcut *The Food of the Gods* (see page 55) were the products of Gauguin's rather fanciful approach to the Tahitian scene and its mythology. We know, too, that the effigies in paintings like *The Ancestors of Tehamana* (see foldout) had no real counterparts in Tahitian sculpture but were derived from the religious art of India, Java, and ancient Egypt. Still, the notion persists that the remainder of Gauguin's Tahiti—the idyllic settings peopled by childlike, unspoiled beings—may be taken as a literal transcript of what the artist found in the colony.

There is little need here to recount the story of Gauguin's desertion of a bourgeois job and family and his subsequent flight to the South Seas. It may be enlightening, though, to consider what Gauguin was looking for when he arrived in Papeete for the first time—and what he actually found.

"There, in Tahiti," the painter rhapsodized on the eve of his departure from France, "in the silence of the beautiful tropical nights, I shall be able to listen to the sweet murmuring music of my own heart in amorous harmony with the mysterious beings around me." Gauguin expected his putative Eden to produce more than just a melodious heart murmur. As his friend Charles Morice put it, he also looked forward to meeting "living statues from man's primeval age . . . clad only in sunbeams" who "walked always amid flowers." It was, however, a vision somewhat at variance with reality.

By the time Gauguin reached Papeete on June 9, 1891, a couple of days after he had turned forty-three, the Eden he sought had long since vanished. The silence of the nights in Papeete was disrupted regularly by the jangle of honky-tonk music and the Priapean yawping of carousing sailors. The picturesque thatched roofs he envisioned had been replaced by corrugated iron; the simple natives were happier eating in Chinese restaurants than harvesting the gifts of nature; the living statues from man's primeval age were clad mostly in Mother Hubbards by day, and if they wore nothing but moonbeams by night, their wonted postures, libidinous and drunken, were anything but statuesque. Diseases of all sorts were so prevalent that the native population was in danger of extinction.

"It was Europe," a chagrined Gauguin reported, "the Europe I thought I had finished with—in a form even worse, with colonial snobbery and aping of our customs, fashions, vices, and crazes in a manner so grotesque that it bordered on caricature." Nevertheless, there is nothing in his paintings—or in any of his writings intended for public consumption—to indicate that the island was anything less than a paradise on earth.

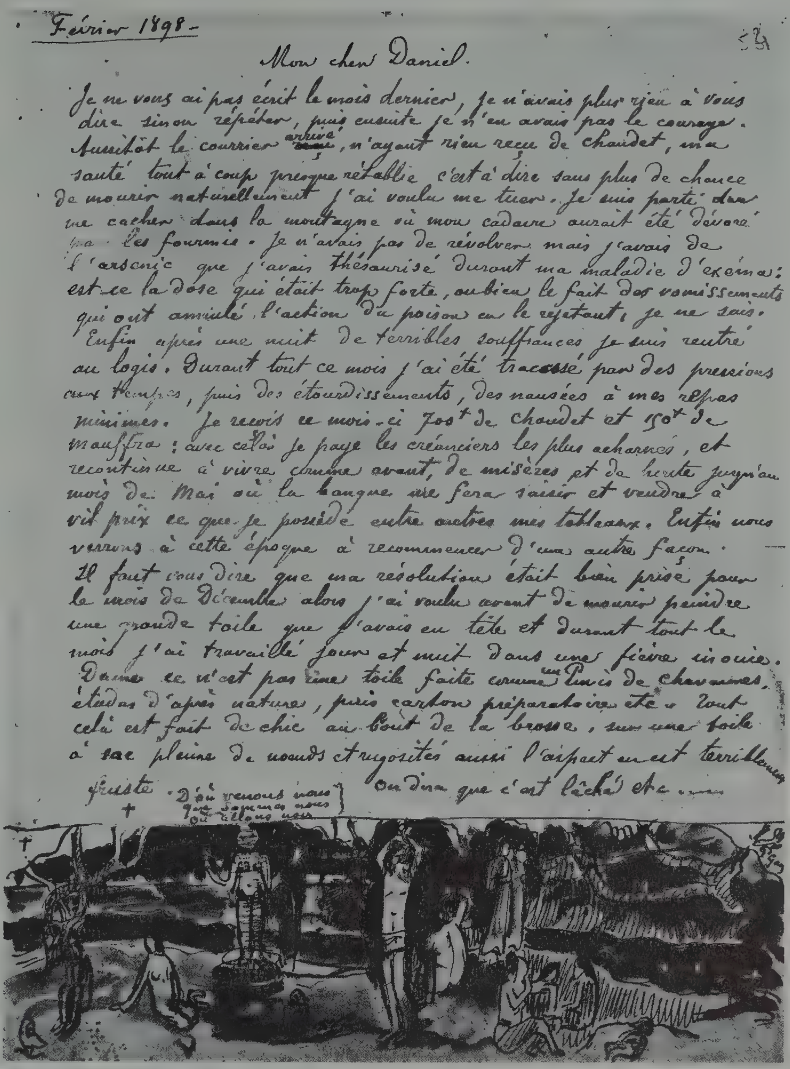
Gauguin was not above stretching the truth when it suited his purposes. Consequently the publication of *Noa Noa*, his potboiler account of Tahitian experiences and impressions, in no way dispelled anyone's ignorance of either the "Fragrant Isle" or his life there. Except for Papeete, Gauguin informed the world at large, Tahiti *was* an unspoiled paradise, and he himself was able to live there as "a true savage, a genuine Maori."

Not the least of Gauguin's flagrant deceptions is his claim to have received a thorough grounding in Tahitian theology from the first of a series of nymphet "wives." "She knows all the gods of the Maori Olympus by heart," he asserted in citing the ostensible source of his researches into the subject. He then proceeded to crib copiously and carelessly from an out-of-date and frequently inaccurate work by a French businessman named Moerenhout. As one of his biographers, the social anthropologist Bengt Danielsson, has noted, "at the time of Gauguin's arrival the Calvinists had been at work for nearly a hundred years and the Roman Catholics and Mormons for fifty. Hence virtually nothing remained of the ancient Tahitian religion and mythology. Few natives even remembered the names of their old pagan gods . . ." No native art had been produced for almost a century, and there were fewer carvings of Tahitian idols left in the colony than could be found in the ethnological museums of Europe.

In 1892 Gauguin applied for and was granted repatriation to France as a "destitute and distressed" traveler, and in 1893 he left Tahiti intending never to return. He remained in France a little less than two years, during which time he came into an inheritance, set up a *ménage à trois* of sorts with a monkey and a half-Malay, half-Indian woman called Annah, executed several paintings and a superb series of woodcuts, worked on *Noa Noa*, and was given an exhibition at the Galerie Durand-Ruel. The show was a financial and critical flop. "If you would like to entertain your children," one journalist advised his readers, "send them to the Gauguin exhibition. The attractions include colored images of ape-like female quadrumanes stretched out on green billiard tables." All this, together with Gauguin's failure to effect a reconciliation with his Danish wife and a beating he incurred during a sojourn in Brittany—where he briefly led a group of painters more notable for their Bohemian behavior than their talents—soured him completely on the idea of remaining in Europe.

If Gauguin had no intention of resettling in a thoroughly Frenchified Tahiti, he had not abandoned his dream of finding a South Seas paradise, and in the spring of 1895 he again left France. His intended destination was Samoa, but a brief stopover in Tahiti stretched into six years, much of which time Gauguin spent in bickering with the ecclesiastic and secular authorities of Punaauia and Papeete, in conducting a series of cranky legal squabbles, and in two separate excursions into muckraking journalism. He also worked for a while as a clerk in the public works office—and somehow found time to dash off a number of his most famous paintings, including *Where Do We Come From?*.

*Where Do We Come From?* was not Gauguin's first attempt to sum up his ruminations on the riddle of existence. A short time before starting the painting he had written some seventy pages of an unpublished and somewhat incoherent philosophical tirade entitled *The Modern Spirit and Catholicism*. Before launching into his central thesis,



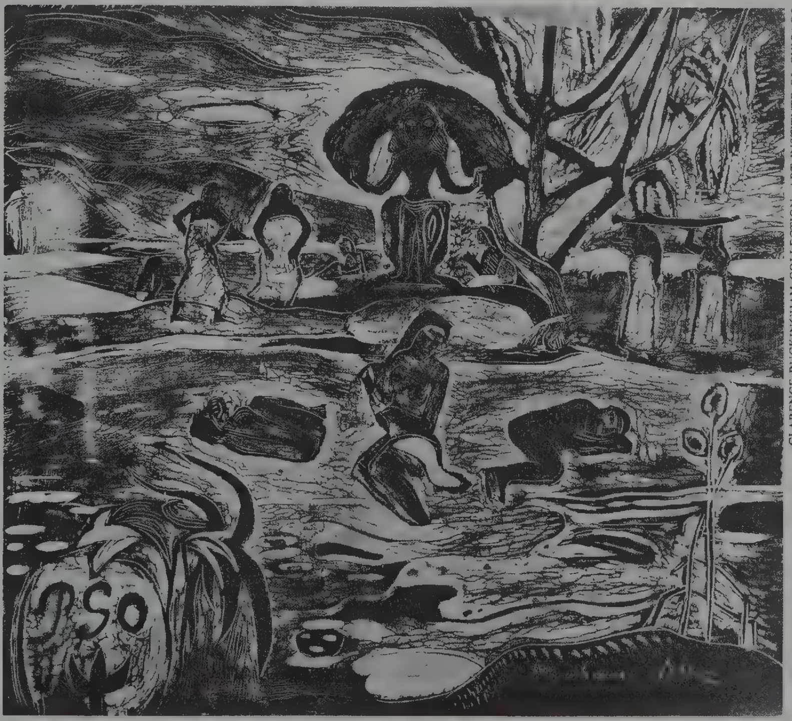
Février 1898 –

Mon cher Daniel.

Je ne vous ai pas écrit le mois dernier, je n'avais plus rien à vous
dire sinon répéter, puis ensuite je n'en avais pas le courage.
Aussitôt le courrier arrivé, n'ayant rien reçu de Chaudet, ma
santé tout à coup presque rétablie c'est à dire sans plus de chance
de mourir naturellement j'ai voulu me tuer. Je suis parti me
me cacher dans la montagne où mon cadavre aurait été dévoré
par les fourmis. Je n'avais pas de révolver mais j'avais de
l'arsenic que j'avais thésaurisé durant ma maladie d'exzéma:
est-ce la dose qui était trop forte, ou bien le fait des vomissements
qui ont annulé l'action du poison en le rejetant, je ne sais.
Enfin après une nuit de terribles souffrances je suis rentré
au logis. Durant tout ce mois j'ai été tracassé par des pressions
aux tempes, puis des étourdissements, des nausées à mes repas
minimes. Je reçois ce mois-ci 700f de Chaudet et 150f de
Mauffra: avec cela je paye les créanciers les plus acharnés, et
recontinue à vivre comme avant, de misères et de honte jusqu'au
mois de Mai où la banque me fera saisir et vendre à
vil prix ce que je possède entre autres mes tableaux. Enfin nous
verrons à cette époque à recommencer d'une autre façon. —
Il faut vous dire que ma résolution était bien prise pour
le mois de Décembre alors j'ai voulu avant de mourir peindre
une grande toile que j'avais en tête et durant tout le
mois j'ai travaillé jour et nuit dans une fièvre inouie.
Dame ce n'est pas une toile faite comme un Puvis de Chavannes,
études d'après nature, puis carton préparatoire etc. Tout
cela est fait de chic au bout de la brosse, sur une toile
à sac pleine de noeuds et rugosités aussi l'aspect en est terriblement
fruste. On dira que c'est lâché etc....

D'où venons nous
Que sommes nous
Où allons nous

JEAN-PIERRE LELOIR—GALERIE CHARPENTIER



CLARENCE BUCKINGHAM COLLECTION, ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

*The first word that Gauguin had painted* Where Do We Come From? *reached Europe early in 1898 in the form of an illustrated letter (top right) to his longtime friend the minor painter Daniel de Monfried. In describing the work Gauguin wrote: "It doesn't stink of models, of technique, or of pretended rules—of which I have always fought shy, though sometimes with fear." The 1894 woodcut at right,* The Food of the Gods *(Mahana Atua), with its dominant but altogether fanciful idol, typifies Gauguin's inventive approach to Polynesian mythology.*

a tortuous, pseudoscientific discussion of "the history of the atom and the soul" (which Gauguin took to be "one and the same being at two different stages"), the author wrote: "Confronted with the problem that is posed by the questions *Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?* we must ask ourselves what is our ideal, natural, and rational destiny . . ."

It would be a monumental understatement to say that Gauguin's personal circumstances at the time were not conducive to an optimistic view of man's fate—or even to a clearly-thought-out pessimistic view. He had suffered a series of heart attacks; his body was a mass of syphilitic lesions; his eyesight was failing; the ankle he had broken in the brawl in Brittany was an almost constant source of excruciating pain and had driven him to the use of morphine and laudanum. He suffered from recurrent bouts of fever, along with faintness and dizziness and, in all probability, malnutrition. To further exacerbate matters he had thoroughly alienated the European community, and even the notoriously undiscriminating *vahines* were more than a little reluctant to share his company. Finally, he had received word from Europe that his daughter Aline was dead.

At the beginning of 1898 he tried to kill himself and failed. But shortly before his botched attempt at suicide he determined to have one last go at crystallizing his broodings on canvas. The painting he executed, *Where Do We Come From?*, was intended to be his "spiritual testament." Considered solely on its aesthetic merits, it is not only Gauguin's ultimate masterpiece but one of the prime works in all modern art. Gauguin himself was the first to realize this. "I believe," he was later to write, ". . .that I will never do anything better or even like it. Before dying I put into it all my energy, a passion so painful, in terrible circumstances, and a vision so clear, needing no correction, that the hastiness disappears and life surges up."

Gauguin's paintings were not illustrations of his rather muddled ideas, but voyages of discovery. As one of his more eminent exegetes, Robert Goldwater, has summed it up, "both form and subject, vague at first, and only half understood, became clear to the painter himself in the process of creation." In a sense Gauguin was right in maintaining that the title of his masterpiece was a kind of signature appended to the finished product. It was, though, a signature that already existed and was waiting, so to speak, for the right dotted line to come along.

Gauguin's own description of *Where Do We Come From?* is as good as any:

> It is a canvas about five feet by twelve. The two upper corners are chrome yellow, with an inscription on the left, and my name on the right, like a fresco on a golden wall with its corners damaged.
>
> To the right, below, a sleeping baby and three seated women. Two figures dressed in purple confide their thoughts to each other. An enormous crouching figure, which intentionally violates the perspective, raises its arm in the air and looks in astonishment at these two people who dare to think of

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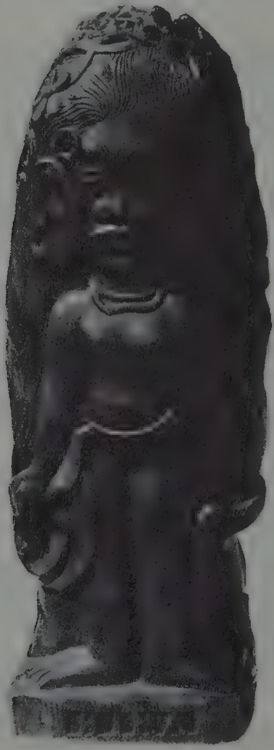

## The Spirit and the Flesh

In the Tahitian paintings that lead up to Gauguin's "spiritual testament," *Where Do We Come From?*—here reproduced in the foldout—certain loosely religious motifs occur again and again. There is, for instance, the Biblical Eve in her island incarnation, Hina the moon-goddess, whom he liked to depict because she was mother of the gods and of the whole human race—but who seemed mostly to be the patron idol of the artist's imagination. For Hina is as much a creation of his dream tropics as were the snake charmers of Henri Rousseau's jungles. She appears in various guises in many of Gauguin's works, including the wood carving at left, with its marked Javanese influences. In *The Ancestors of Tehamana* (opposite) Gauguin allowed his teen-age *vahine*, whom he usually equated with Eve, to pose in mission-approved attire. But he surrounded her with pagan devices—including a figure that is possibly Hina, but this time Hindu-derived. Hina again is the dominant figure in *The Feast of Hina*, in which the goddess is posed more like an Egyptian than a Polynesian deity, and in *The Moon and the Earth* (page 64), an enigmatic treatment of a myth in which a maidenlike Hina (the moon) and Fatou (the earth) debate whether man shall be accorded immortality. Gauguin never specifically identified the "idol" (background left) in *Where Do We Come From?*, but its similarity to the Hina wood sculpture is unmistakable, while its somewhat lunar coloration is appropriate to her. Finally, in the person of the modest young girl in *Words of the Devil* Eve crops up once more, apparently pondering the blandishments of the enigmatic figure squatting behind her. She will succumb, of course.

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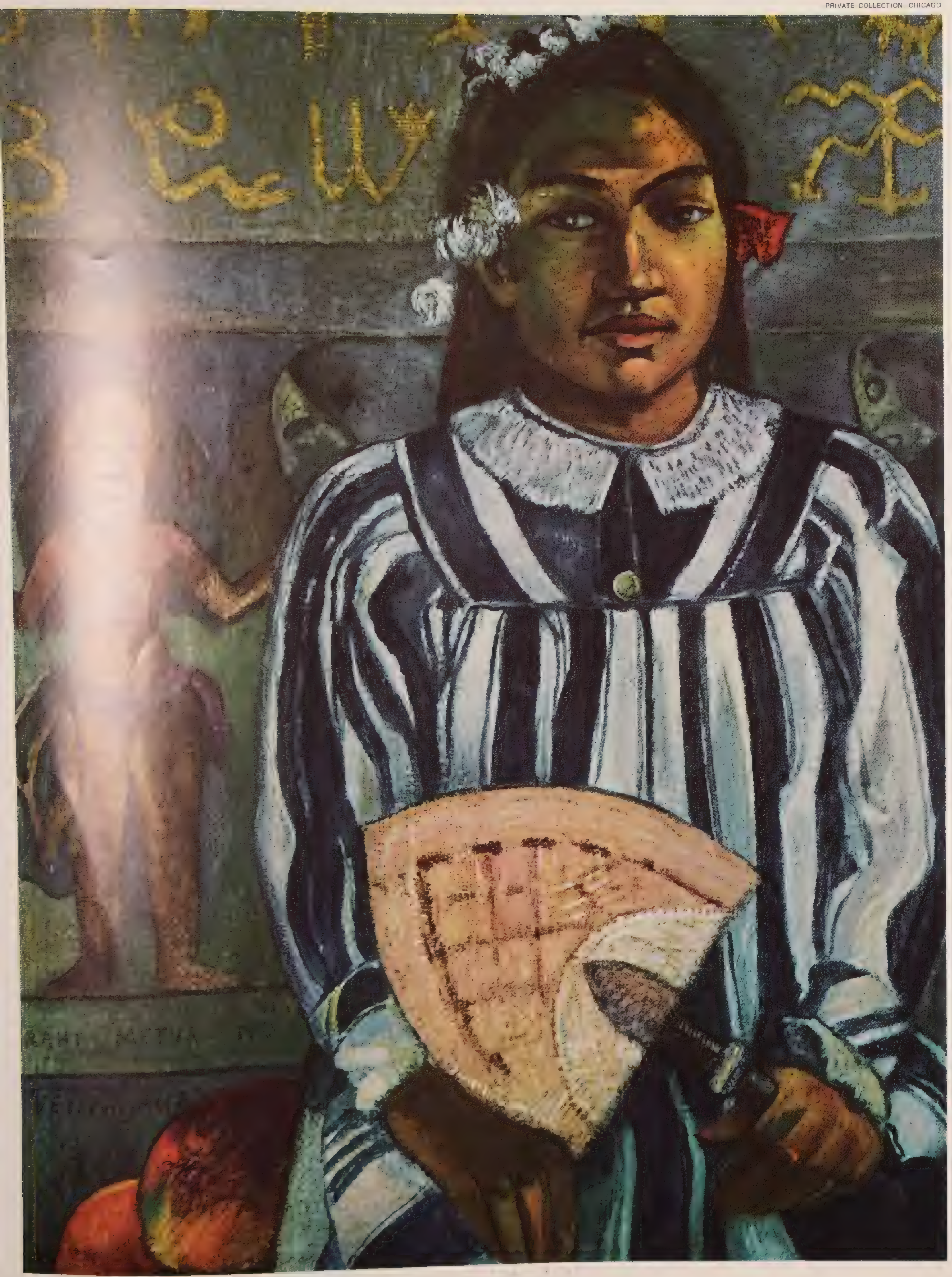
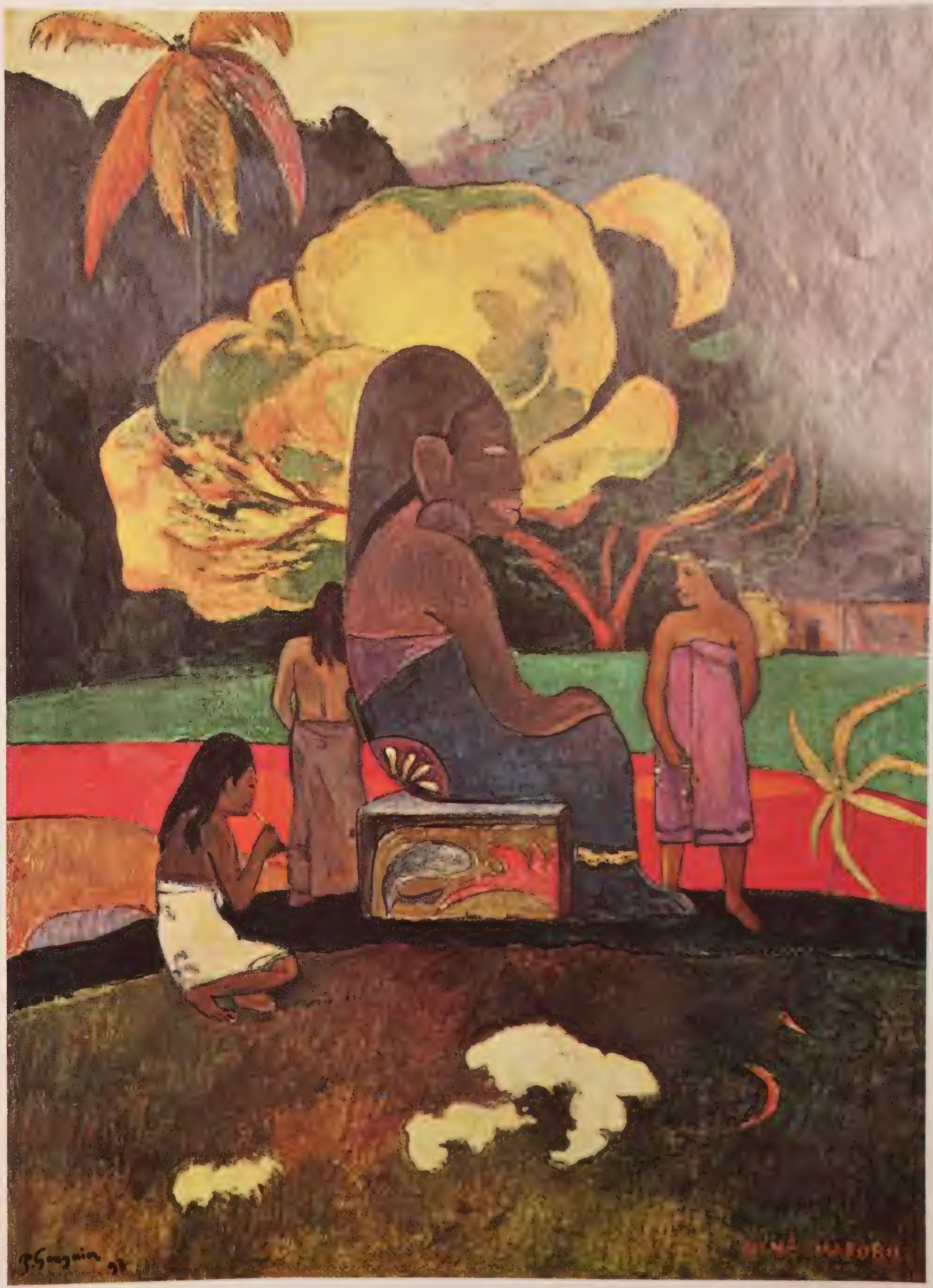
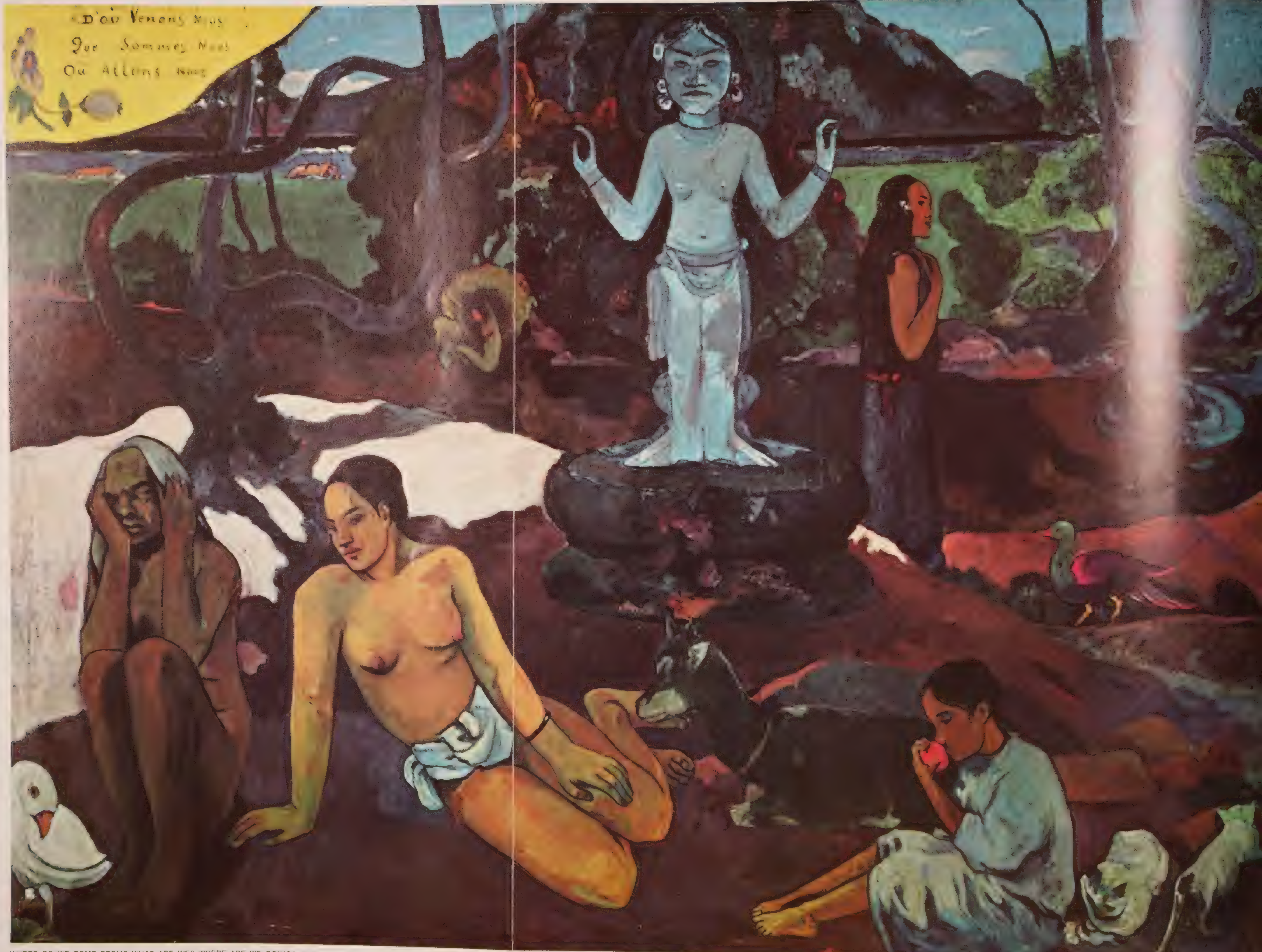


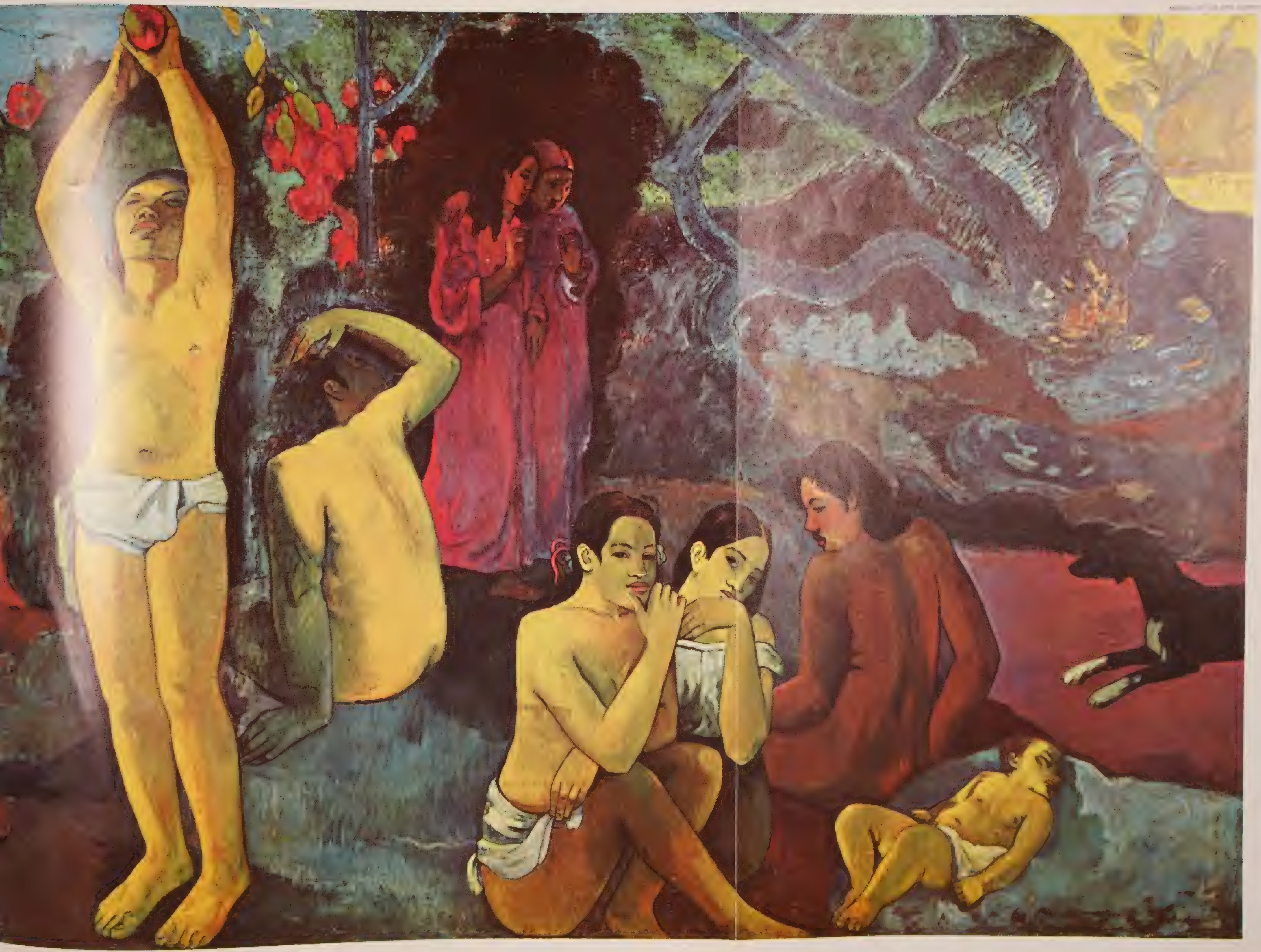
THE ANCESTORS OF TEHAMANA (Tehura), 1893


P. Gauguin 93

THE FEAST OF HINA (Hina Maruru), 1893


D'où Venons Nous
Que Sommes Nous
Où Allons Nous

WHERE DO WE COME FROM? WHAT ARE WE? WHERE ARE WE GOING?, 1897



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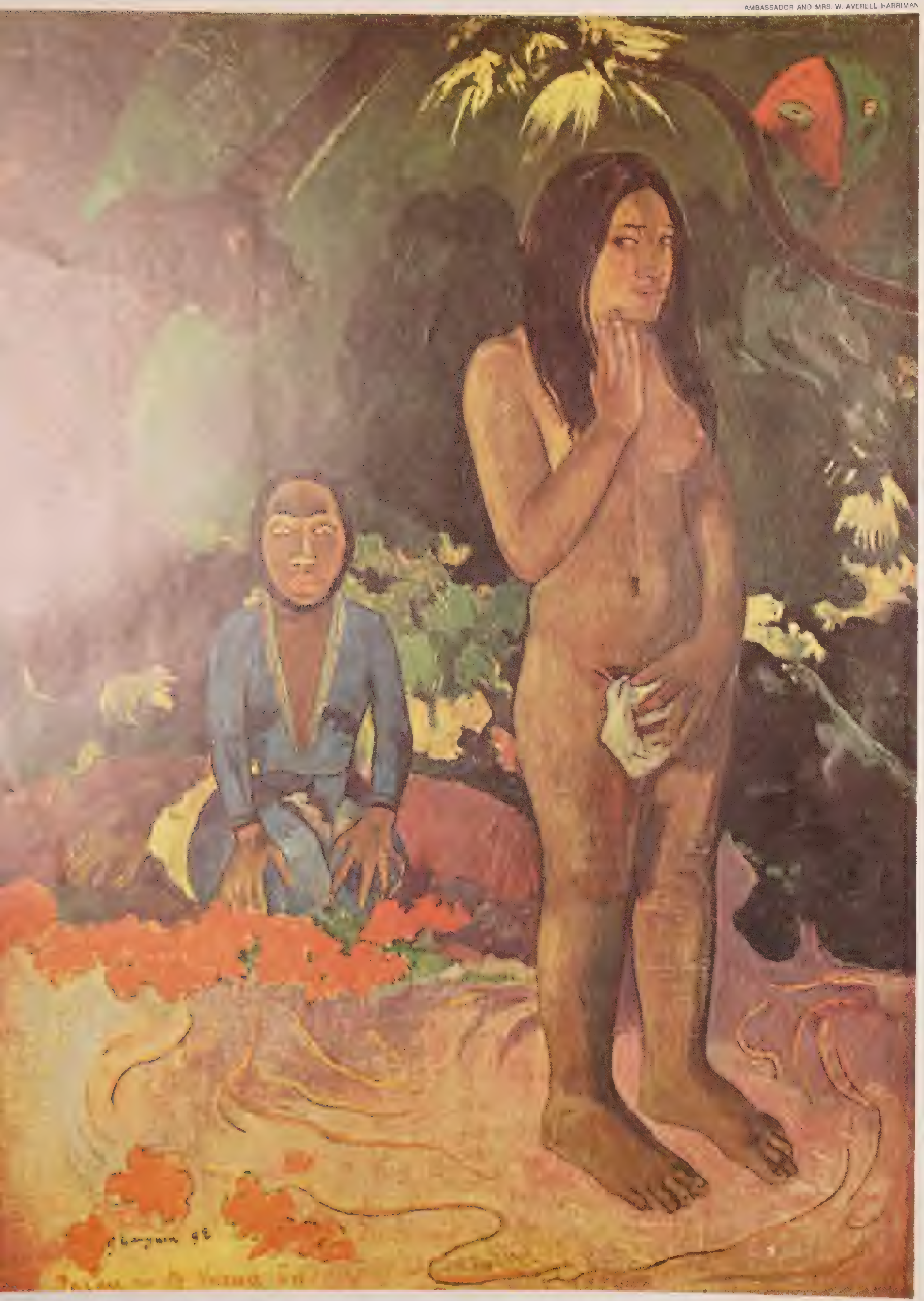
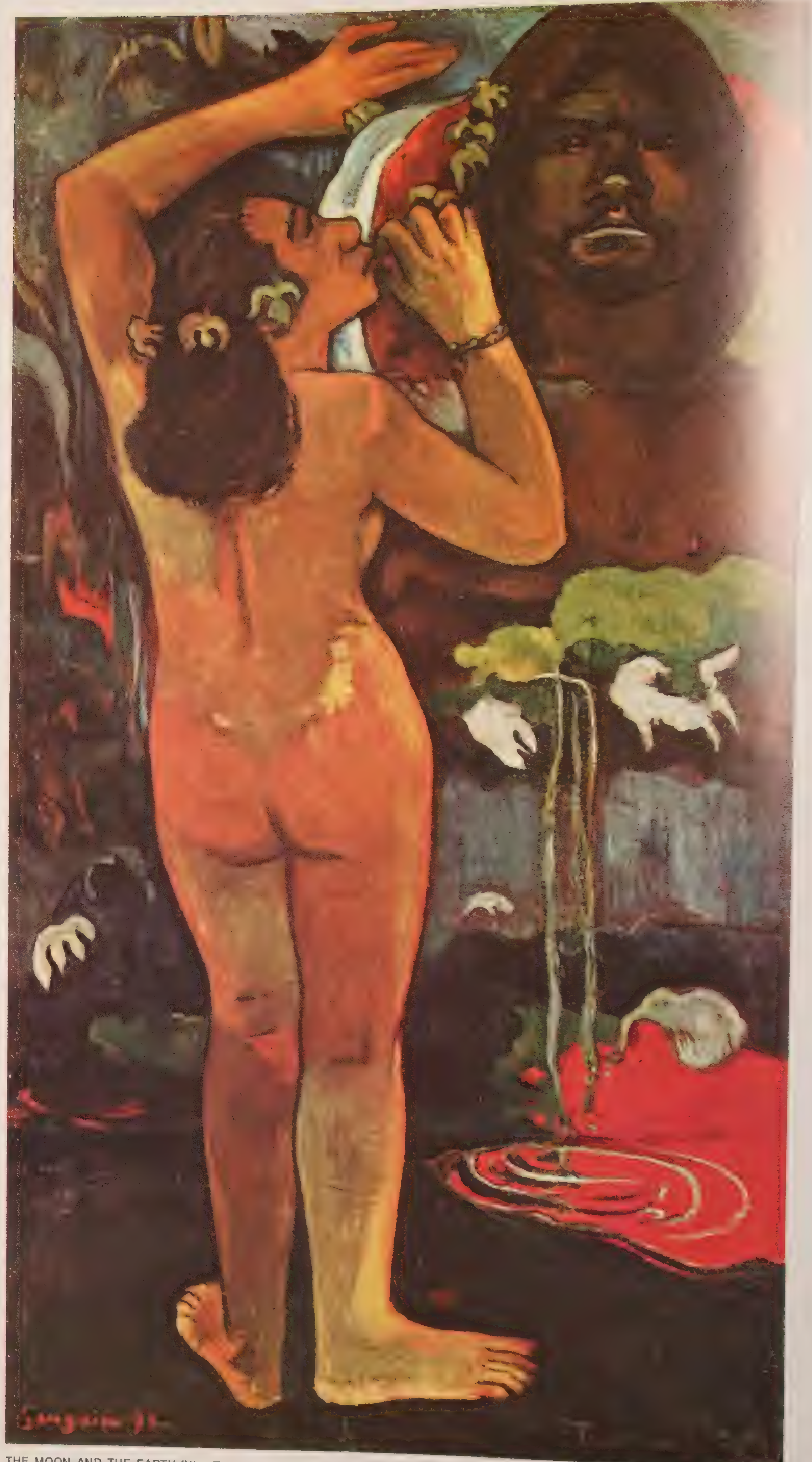


ORDS OF THE DEVIL (Parau Na Te Varua Ino), 1892

LILLIE P. BLISS COLLECTION, MUSEUM OF MODERN



THE MOON AND THE EARTH (Hina Tefatou), 1893

TEXT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 56

their destiny. A figure in the center is picking fruit. Two cats near a child. A white goat. An idol, both arms mysteriously and rhythmically raised, seems to indicate the Beyond. A crouching girl seems to listen to the idol. Lastly, an old woman approaching death appears reconciled and resigned to her thoughts. She completes the story. At her feet a strange white bird, holding a lizard in its claw, represents a futility of words.

"A futility of words." It is as though poor, sick Gauguin were passing final judgment on his attempt to verbalize his ideas in *The Modern Spirit and Catholicism,* or to "explain" his "spiritual testament"—a testament that tells us only that we are born, age, and die. "But there is also this question which perplexes me," the artist was to write. "Where does the execution of a painting begin . . . who knows when, in the depths of the artist's soul the work was begun—unconsciously perhaps?"

It would be an exercise in futility to try to say exactly when *Where Do We Come From?* was begun, unconsciously perhaps, in the depths of Gauguin's soul. However some of the motifs of the picture have been traced to their sources with reasonable exactitude. One of these is the terminal figure ("reading" from right to left) of the old woman, a figure that recurs with startling frequency—and in a variety of related guises—in Gauguin's works. As Wayne V. Andersen has pointed out, a Peruvian mummy bound into a similar foetal position was on view in a Paris ethnological museum in the 1880's and obviously made quite an impression on Gauguin, who had spent four years of his childhood in Peru and often boasted of his "savage" Peruvian ancestry. Whether consciously or not, the painter appropriated the figure, usually relating it in some way to his persistent fascination with the Biblical Eve. (Sexless as the figure "picking fruit" in the center of *Where Do We Come From?* may be, the Eve-motif is inescapable.) Thus it would not be overstraining credulity to say that Gauguin's "old woman approaching death" has, somewhere in the artist's unconscious, already crossed the line and that this mummy-figure completes the picture's cradle-to-grave cycle.

In describing *Where Do We Come From?* Gauguin was unnecessarily circumspect about the identity of the "idol" that "seems to indicate the Beyond." "The idol in my picture is not there as a literary explanation," he wrote, "but as a statue . . . it is one with nature in the dream I dream before my hut. It rules our primitive souls, the imaginary consolation of our suffering, vague and ignorant as we are about the mystery of our origin and our destiny." There is little doubt that the "idol," or "statue," represents the artist's conception of Hina, the Polynesian moon-goddess and giver of all life. Whether any of Gauguin's Tahitian friends would have recognized this symbol in the picture is doubtful, however, since the natives had never been in the habit of creating naturalistic portraits of individual deities—and even if they had been, it is unlikely that they would have borrowed from the styles of Javanese, Indian, and Egyptian sculpture (as Gauguin did) in trying to portray them.

Its content aside, *Where Do We Come From?* stands as the summation and fulfillment of Gauguin's genius. More than any previous postimpressionist painting it is a massive refutation of impressionist theory. In place of Claude Monet's "instantaneity" (the credible representation of a particular light as it is refracted in a particular instant of time) Gauguin fuses antinomies—sunlight and moonlight, night and day, the warm vibrancy of life and the cold stillness of death—in a superbly musical evocation of the human condition. It is an evocation realized almost entirely through nonliterary, abstract elements, through "colors arranged in a certain order," and it would hardly have been less compelling had there been no recognizable figures or objects on the canvas.

Whatever else he may have been, Gauguin was a master decorator who recognized the long-denied but proper function of painting: to cover flat surfaces without violating their flatness. He was not by nature an easel painter but a muralist (even before the first Tahitian sojourn one critic had exclaimed: "Walls, walls; give him walls!"). *Where Do We Come From?* was the wall Gauguin had been waiting for. With it, at last, he achieved not a fragment of a fresco but the breadth and monumentality that his particular talents demanded. The forms are invested with an amplitude and simplicity unprecedented in post-Renaissance Western art; the color glows and mutes in a sweeping orchestration no smaller canvas could accommodate.

"My dream is intangible," Gauguin once wrote from Tahiti, "it implies no allegory; as Mallarmé said, 'It is a musical poem and needs no libretto.' Consequently the essence of a work, unsubstantial and of a higher order, lies precisely in 'what is not expressed.'" Ultimately Gauguin's "spiritual testament" is a testament to the futility of words—and to the futility of life. As Danielsson concludes: "All who persist, as do rational Westerners, in trying to understand and analyze everything, including the problems of life and death, inevitably grow unhappy, while animals, children, and 'savages' . . . are happy for the very reason that it never enters their heads to reflect on metaphysical problems to which there are no solutions."

Gauguin tried to be a savage but failed. What Eden there was, was within him, in the dreams he dreamed sitting before his hut—and, who knows, perhaps at his clerk's desk years before his "savage" nature asserted itself. Given his circumstances it is little wonder that the Eden he painted is a place pervaded with melancholy—one of the most poignant and haunting places in all of art.

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*Jay Jacobs, an editor in the* AMERICAN HERITAGE *book division, writes frequently on modern art and artists.*

# The Tightened Landscape

We are running out of open space. Or are we? Not if we make the most of the bits and strips of land that can still be saved for parks and greenways

*By* WILLIAM H. WHYTE

The metropolis, it would seem, is running out of space. There are too many people living on too little land, goes the diagnosis, and what land is left is so hacked up that the only sane planning policy is to look to the hinterland and start all over again. Lately experts have been drawing up Year 2000 plans for decentralizing the whole mess, pushing people outward beyond suburbia and putting them up in brand-new model cities. These are to come in all shapes and sizes—megacities, bubble cities, modular cities, platform cities, stilt cities—but the one thing they all have in common is space. There will be space within them for their controlled, optimum populations, and surrounding them will be vast greenbelts, which in the customary air-brush renderings are shown stretching out to infinity, with not a trace of the grubby old cities and suburbs.

There is a good chance, however, that the trend may be in the opposite direction. The edge of suburbia will undoubtedly ooze farther outward, but there are indications that most of our industry and most of our people are going to be working out the future within the metropolitan areas that we have now; that we are going to be more jammed together than ever. And it may not be such a bad thing if we are.

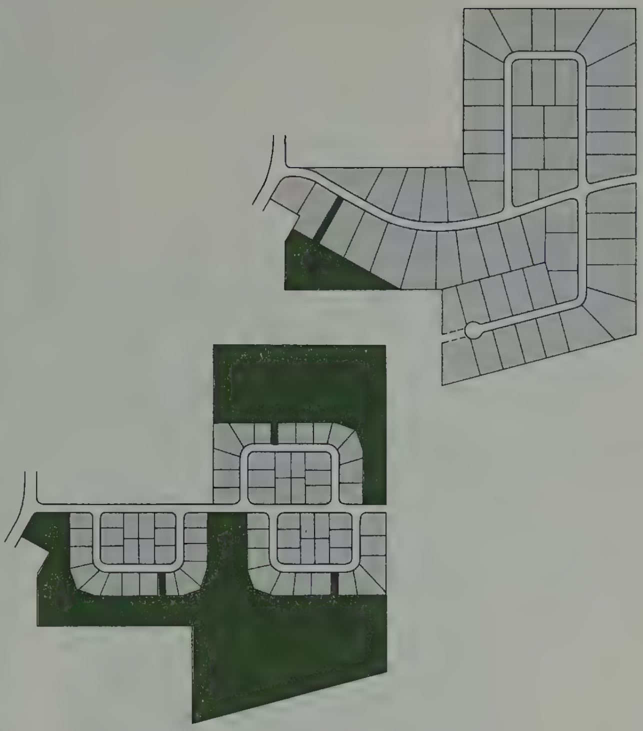
A prescription for disaster, some would say; there would be no breathing space left, no parks, no countryside. But there is plenty of land, right under our noses. The cost is high, to be sure, but there is one good thing about high land prices: they force ingenuity. When there seemed to be more land, we squandered it with impunity. We still do, but thanks to the very fierceness of the competition for land, we are beginning to seek a more effective and intensive use of it. If we succeed, the more crowded landscape of tomorrow may be more amenable, more open in feeling, than the less dense one of today.

Developers, of all people, have been helping to show the way. Until recently, they splattered their houses all over the countryside and used five acres to do the work of one. They had to. Suburban zoning boards laid down the ground rules, and they were gripped with the notion that the best way to save open space and the "character" of their area was to specify rigid lot sizes, usually set as high as local pride and income could enforce.

As a consequence developers were forced to chew up an enormous amount of land to house a given number of people and to lay down an overblown network of streets and utilities to tie all this together. The countryside had to be homogenized. If woods were in the way, down they went. If streams cut up the tract, they were buried in pipes. For a good clue as to what was to go next, one had only to check the titles of proposed subdivisions (Maple Grove, River View, Rolling Hills); characteristically, they are named after that which they are about to destroy.

This sprawling pattern not only looked like hell, it was uneconomical. It cost a great deal of money to level a landscape. As long as land prices were relatively cheap, developers could absorb the cost, but by the mid 1950's the price of land was rising faster than the price people were willing to pay for the finished house and lot. By the 1960's developers were in a bind. If they were not to go broke, they were going to have to find a better approach.

WILLIAM H. WHYTE



CLUSTER HOUSING

*Above, houses rim a grassy common at Village Green in Hillsborough, N.J. In the builders' plan (top right) open space was eaten up by one-acre lots. In the final plan (bottom right) clustering preserves large open spaces.*

For years planners have been arguing that there was indeed a better approach. Cluster the houses, they said. Instead of spreading the houses all over a tract, developers could group the houses on the most buildable parts and leave the bulk of the land as open space. This way they would provide the residents with some really usable open space, spare the woods and streams, and save themselves the cost of improving these away. They would also have to lay down far less concrete for roads and fewer utility lines per house.

There was nothing particularly new about the idea—essentially, it was the principle of the New England town—but to developers chastened by soaring land costs, it now seemed a revolutionary concept, and with belated enthusiasm they began to promote it. Local zoning boards were suspicious; if cluster was so good for developers, they figured, there must be something wrong with it. But here and there a few cluster developments went up. They worked. Contrary to the widely held assumption that all Americans hankered for a home set in as large a lot as possible, people liked the cluster arrangement. Most of the early cluster developments sold as well or better than conventional developments in the same price range. Today there is still plenty of resistance in many a suburb, but the cluster approach is well on its way to becoming the dominant trend.

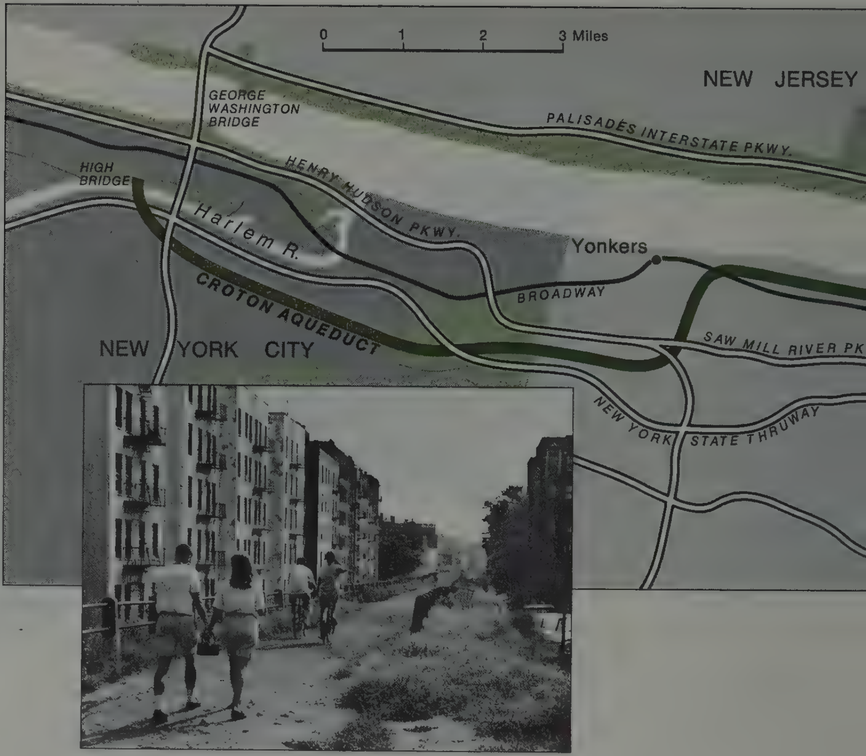
The homeowner's private open space, often in the form of a patio or walled garden, may be small—sometimes no more than twenty by twenty feet. Despite the snugness, however, or more likely because of it, people have found these enclaves more useful than triple the acreage in side yards and back yards. And there is no lawn to mow. The common greens and surrounding open spaces provide a full range of recreational facilities—swimming pools, golf courses, bridle trails, and sometimes, as at Reston and Columbia, man-made lakes for boating.

One of the most promising things about cluster development is the opportunity it provides for tying the separate spaces together into some sort of a network. Philadelphia provides an excellent example. When its Far Northeast section was on the brink of development, the city planners decided that they were not going to let it be hacked up by a miscellany of separate plans. They would lay down the developers' open space for them and a good bit else besides. The houses would be grouped in clusters and the acreage along the wooded creeks that ran through the area would have to be deeded by the developers as community space.

Developers took to the idea. A host of them were involved, but because of the preplanning bestowed on them by the city, *in toto* they have provided a magnificent open-space network that cost the city nothing and will one day be priceless. The neighborhood is no showcase—the houses are stock builders' houses and quite ordinary. But this is why it is so significant. If this kind of amenity can be built into tract housing in a city, surely the potential elsewhere must be tremendous.

However, we cannot expect developers to save the land we need the most. For the core of any open-space network the public is going to have to spend its own money buying land, and a very great deal of money. At the moment the prospects would not seem

ALL DIAGRAMS FRANCIS AND SHAW



AQUEDUCT INTO PARK

*A swath of unused land thirty-two miles long and sixty-six feet wide forms the right-of-way of New York's old Croton Aqueduct, almost dry for a generation. Potentially it is a superb linear park, and the land is already publicly owned. Within New York's city limits, right, it runs past apartment back yards, a scruffy but welcome relief (since the aqueduct itself runs underground) from cars and asphalt. Beyond the city limits it becomes, far right, a rugged wilderness trail through suburbia. When New York State clears away various local encroachments, center, the aqueduct land will form a long green path extending all the way from apartment door to rural woodland.*

too good, since the supply of land appears to be diminishing. Most of the big open spaces have already been bought, or lost, and there are few to be had in urban areas at any price.

There are lots of small spaces, however. Total them up and you will find that they account for more than one half of the land in most metropolitan areas. It is true that they are scattered in bits and pieces and odd shapes and do not provide the form and structure that many regional planners think is necessary. But their potential is great just the same, and with ingenuity many of them can be linked in such a way as to make them more effective for people than huge greenbelts or wedges would be.

We are dealing with two kinds of reality. One is open space as it appears on a map. This is the big picture, or macroview, highly satisfying to planners. The other reality is open space as people perceive it. There is quite a difference. If you were to chart the impressions people have of open space, you would get a highly skewed picture, much like the joke maps of a New Yorker's eye view of the United States. But this subjective reality is extremely important. As different as people's impressions might be, any composite would show that most people are aware of only a fraction of the open land, that small areas stand out the most, and that people grossly exaggerate the size of such areas.

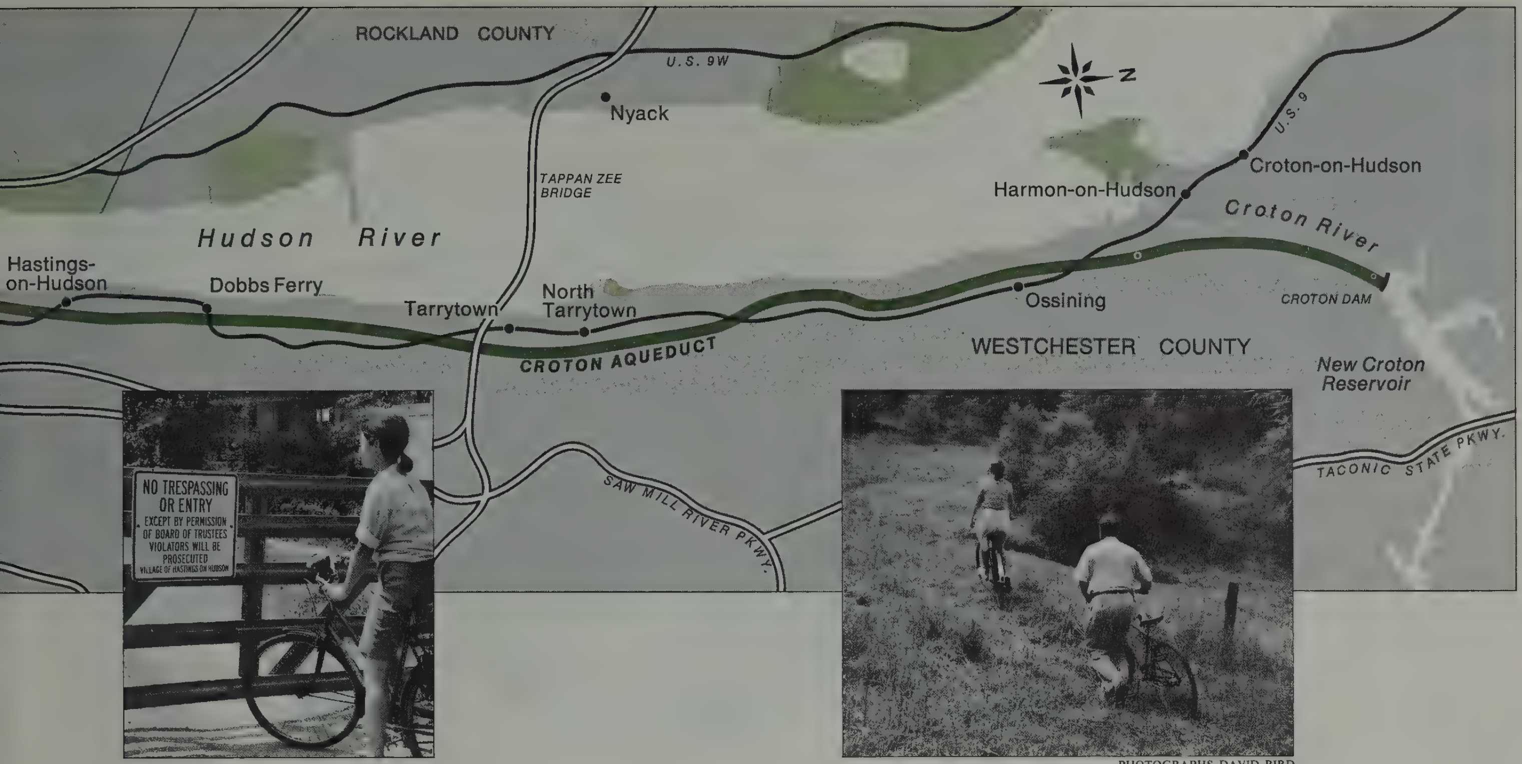
Big spaces are certainly valuable, and we ought to have more of them. But it is the edge of the space that counts most. This is what people see, and though they should venture beyond them, they rarely do. Close to many of our big cities are large forests, but their interiors, for most people, simply do not exist. Use tends to be concentrated in a few accessible spots along the roadsides. For most of the people most of the time the edge of the open space *is* the open space.

This is one of the reasons why small spaces can be so efficient. Proportionately, they provide more edge, especially when they are linear. To oversimplify a bit, let us take an area of four square miles. If it were all in one space and roughly square, there would be eight miles of edge.

If we were to take the same amount of land and lay it out in a strip a half a mile wide, we would have eighteen miles of edge.

If we pursue the edge concept too far, of course, we will end up with all edge and nothing else. It should be obvious, however, that per acre, linear strips are probably the most important kind of open space that we can lay our hands on. They are not only worthwhile in their own right, they are also useful in tying other kinds of open space together.

There are all sorts of connective strips to be had. Our metropolitan areas are crisscrossed with them. The same changes in transportation that have made it so difficult for people to find a place to walk or cycle have made obsolete many old rights-of-way—aqueducts, canals, railroads, interurban trolley lines. Some have been obliterated, but a tremendous amount of mileage lies unused and weedy that with not too much expense could be rehabilitated into a system of trails and walkways. Along the Hudson River corridor, for example, there are 350 miles of abandoned railroad lines,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U.S. 9W
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Z
U.S. 9
Croton-on-Hudson
Harmon-on-Hudson
Croton River
TAPPAN ZEE BRIDGE
Hudson River
Hastings-on-Hudson
Dobbs Ferry
Tarrytown
North Tarrytown
Ossining
CROTON DAM
CROTON AQUEDUCT
WESTCHESTER COUNTY
New Croton Reservoir
TACONIC STATE PKWY.
SAW MILL RIVER PKWY.
NO TRESPASSING OR ENTRY
EXCEPT BY PERMISSION OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES
VIOLATORS WILL BE PROSECUTED
VILLAGE OF HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON

PHOTOGRAPHS DAVID BIRD

190 miles of abandoned canals, and 60 miles of aqueduct rights-of-way through which water has long since ceased to flow.

The Croton Aqueduct is a good example of the riches to be found. Back in 1837 the City of New York bought a 66-foot-wide strip and buried a pipe in it to carry water from a reservoir in Westchester County to the city. By the 1930's it had become almost obsolete. Some parts of the right-of-way were made available as little parks, but the city also began giving permits to abutting landowners, and the right-of-way became interrupted with parking lots, dump heaps, and link fences. By 1955 it had been more or less abandoned as an aqueduct, but because of legal complications it continued to lie in limbo.

In 1965 the Hudson River Valley Commission held up the aqueduct as a classic example of access and urged that the whole length be transformed into a linear park. The exciting thing about a project like this is that it can be made ready in fairly short order. It will take time to clear out some of the encroachments, but the bulk of it will soon be available to the public, and in several years it will provide a reasonably continuous walkway all the way from the Bronx to northern Westchester County.

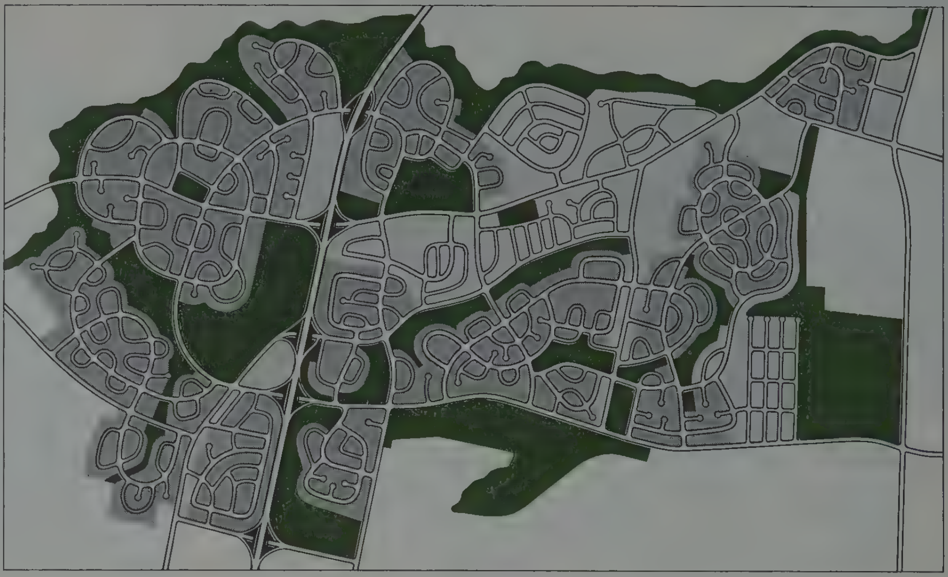
Railroad rights-of-way are another great asset. The railroads have been abandoning service on them at a rapid clip—some 10,000 miles in the past decade. These rights-of-way, which range from 50 to 150 feet in width, make excellent bridle trails and walkways. One such project is the "Illinois Prairie Path," a stretch running from Chicago to its western suburbs along the route of the old Chicago, Aurora and Elgin trolley line. Under the leadership of the Chicago Open Lands Project, private groups and public agencies are trying to acquire the right-of-way and make it the spine of a walkway and bridle trail system.

Many canals await rediscovery. The most celebrated, thanks to the itinerant Justice Douglas and his annual hikes, is the Chesapeake and Ohio, bordering the Potomac. This is a particularly entrancing stretch and one of the longest—about 185 miles between Washington, D.C., and Cumberland, Maryland. But there are others across the country that have almost as great a potential, and the cost of rehabilitating them as walks need not be prohibitive.

Stream valleys are the best connectors of all; they are usually good-looking to begin with, but a humdrum watercourse, even one that is dry most of the time, can be the makings of an excellent facility. Ordinarily engineers don't like such streams and put them into concrete troughs whenever they can. Stream beds that run through metropolitan areas in the West and Southwest are thus tamed, and people are not supposed to trespass. But water flows in them only a few days a year, and a number of communities have begun to use them as cycling paths. A next step would be to deconcrete some streams and plant their banks with thirsty trees, like sycamores or willows.

Small arroyos that the engineers have not gotten around to can also be useful. Ordinarily these dry creeks are thought of as nuisances: they make steep ravines and are often choked with thickets of brush. But there is much that can be done with them. In Santa Barbara, California, for ex-

WILLIAM H. WHYTE



GREEN LAND PRESERVED

*A creek and its course, above, provide a winding green alongside row houses in the Far Northeast section of Philadelphia. In the city plan drawn up in the 1950's for this subdivision, right, a network of such watercourses is preserved as common land, indicated in green on the map. Houses are grouped in clusters within the subdivision.*

ample, the arroyos provide a natural framework by which the open spaces of new developments can be linked together. The county has been allowing developers to reduce lot sizes somewhat if they will dedicate the ravine portions as permanent open space.

Utility rights-of-way are another overlooked asset. These swaths are usually regarded as eyesores, but with a little work they can be transformed into walkways and cycle paths. One county that has made the attempt is Santa Clara, in California. Its flat valley floor has been so splattered with subdivisions that it is the classic case of urban sprawl, and one would think any kind of open-space network out of the question. But blight has been the mother of invention; the county is weaving rights-of-way for aqueducts and high-tension lines, creekside strips and school sites, into a fine system of "greenways."

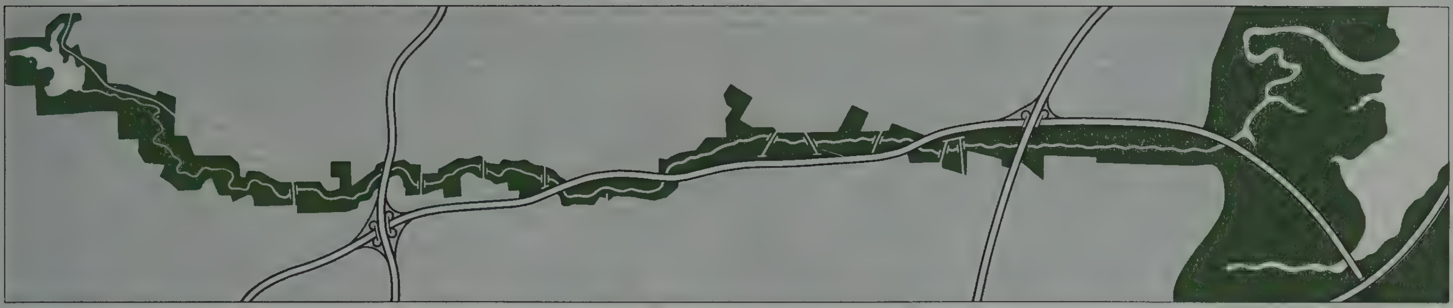
The surest way to save such open spaces is to acquire full ownership. But there is neither the money to buy up all the land to be saved nor the money to maintain it afterward. If the landscape is to be kept alive, furthermore, it is often better to have the most comely open space kept up by landowners. The question is how to make sure the spaces stay open. Up to a point, zoning can help. This is especially true of flood plains and land along the creeks, which usually happen to be the most attractive land; it is such land that ought to be kept open to protect the public from flood damage.

But zoning is highly vulnerable to local pressures. A more permanent measure is the acquisition of an easement. Through this ancient device the public buys away the landowner's right to louse up his own property. He keeps title to it and can do to it what he always did. The easement specifies that on the portion covered—the land 300 feet on each side of the stream—he will not put up houses or billboards, cut down trees, or dig pits.

Easements work best when they are applied along key natural features, such as streams and riversides, or along roads. They would cost too much if they were used to interdict development of large areas, but when they are closely tailored to the topography, the cost can be quite reasonable. Wisconsin has been buying scenic easements from farms along the Great River Road bordering the Mississippi for about twenty to twenty-two dollars an acre.

An easement program benefits landowners; it protects their flanks, and they know they won't wake up one day and see bulldozers felling the woods on their neighbors' property. In some areas it has been the landowners themselves who have initiated easements. A group of landowners on the Maryland side of the Potomac across from Mount Vernon pledged that they would give scenic easements on their property if Congress would appropriate sufficient money to buy parkland in fee simple as an anchor.

Within the cities connective links are harder to come by. Most of what open land remains is in small and scattered pieces, and old-line park officials look down their noses at such spaces; they like to work with big spaces and charge that small, odd-sized parks are difficult to maintain and are a prey to vandalism. But these pieces are what we have to work with, and with imagi-



R. B. MYERS, SAN JOSE PLANNING DEPT.

GREEN LAND RECLAIMED

*The landscaped course of a dry creek-bed provides a belt of green land traversing the monotonous suburban sprawl of Santa Clara County, California. Along the right-of-way of one of the county's high-tension lines, left, Santa Clarans have created another pleasant linear park for strollers that serves as part of their successful "Greenway" program.*

nation they can be fashioned into tremendous assets. The fact that they are surrounded by development not only makes them accessible to people, but their enclosure by surrrounding buildings often makes them seem much bigger than they are.

Lately there has been a move to "vest-pocket" parks, and despite the warnings of some park officials, the initial programs have been encouraging. The lesson seems to be that there has to be a sort of critical mass; the parks have to be well distributed throughout the neighborhoods, and the people of the neighborhoods have to be heavily involved in the plan. Where these conditions have been met, as in Philadelphia's excellent program, they have proved very popular.

Another thing to be encouraged about is the revolution that appears to be under way in park design. It is long overdue. Most of our urban parks and playgrounds look as if they were designed by administrators—administrators who dislike children. There is the inevitable expanse of asphalt, the standardized swings, and the signs and fences that are clearly meant to keep the little beggars at bay. Children like trees, especially the kind with branches low enough to climb—but trees are supposed to be a hazard and require additional maintenance. So there are no trees.

The Europeans with their "adventure" playgrounds have demonstrated that the children have a whale of a time with dirt, trees, old crates, and rubble and that they bang themselves up less in the presence of such hazards than they do in standardized playgrounds. We are just beginning to experiment with the same approach, though in a much less permissive way. The best of our new adventure playgrounds are highly designed by adults, but they are very well designed. A few have been a bit too chic for their clientele, but most of them, such as Riis Plaza on New York's Lower East Side,* have been extremely popular. Instead of conventional equipment, the new playgrounds provide a maze of forms: igloos made of stone, tunnels and pipes to crawl through, tree houses to climb on. They also do wonderful things with water—it jets out of pipes and fountains, runs down walls, and streams through labyrinthian sluiceways.

The most striking thing about these playgrounds is their jam-packedness. Per square foot they handle an extraordinary number of children. Nearby, a conventional playground may be almost empty, but the new ones will be jammed with enough children to suggest that the sheer density is one of the reasons they find them so attractive. Psychologists and ecologists who worry about rats' reactions to high-density living ought to look into such phenomena.

Another kind of small space we should have more of is the small midtown park for office workers and shoppers. The outstanding example is the tiny park donated by William S. Paley in midtown Manhattan—fashioned, appropriately enough, on a site once owned by a night club. It is only 42 feet wide and 100 feet deep, but it is an utter delight. The landscape architect Robert L. Zion, who had long been plumping for such an experiment, has used the surrounding buildings to create an outdoor room that is wonderfully snug and attractive. This experi-

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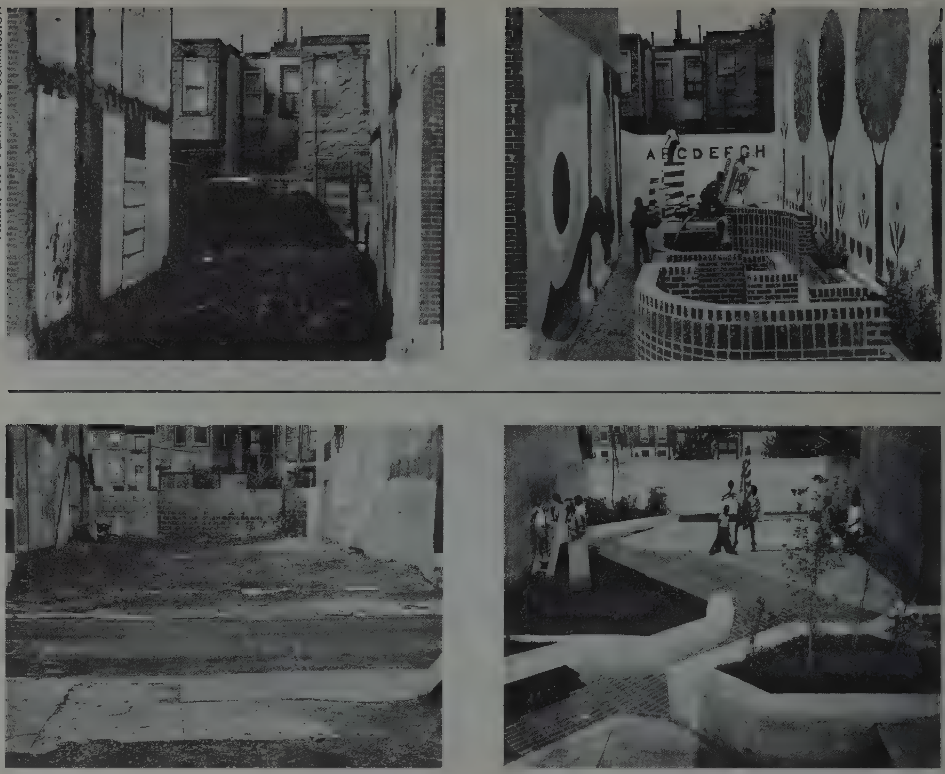
*See HORIZON for Spring, 1967.



PHILA. CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

VEST-POCKET PARKS

*In densely packed cities small slivers of open space are being transformed into tiny recreation areas sometimes known as "vest-pocket" parks. Two such transformations carried out in Philadelphia are shown at right. In each case an abandoned lot has been cleared of refuse and turned into a bright play area for children of the neighborhood. Opposite is Paley Park in New York City, a forty-two-foot-wide park that provides a cozy nook before a soothing waterfall just a few feet from the noise of midtown Manhattan.*

ment is not easily reproduced—it cost more than a million dollars—but the basic idea has great universality. In the heart of almost every city there is a wealth of suitable sites. Look down from a plane. Our downtowns are a checkerboard of small spaces—parking lots—and in some cities more land is covered with cars than with buildings. Surely a few of these spaces could be reclaimed for people; the overall economics of downtown would be better if they were.

Rooftops ought to be used more. Many low structures provide a ready-made base for park and recreation areas, and if new buildings were planned with such double use in mind, the results could be felicitous. This should be especially true of municipal structures, usually the dreariest example of single-purpose design. Sewage disposal plants are a case in point. Horizontally they take up considerable space; vertically, very little—and they look terrible. Cities would get a lot more for their money if they laid parks over the tops of them, or as New York City has thought of doing, put fountains on top of them.

There is tremendous potential in the use of air rights. Railroads have been selling the rights to build over their tracks for all sorts of projects—many of midtown Chicago's new buildings have been going up over tracks. Soon the highway people will be doing the same. The New York Thruway Authority has been soliciting developers to put up projects over various urban sections of its rights-of-way. ("Fashion Your Future Out of Thin Air," the promotional brochure is titled.) Why not parks, too? Parks would fit in with any development scheme and would help convert some of the most divisive urban strips into community assets. Subway and railroad freight yards, which account for a large part of city land, could also be decked over to good effect.

Many other techniques could be cited: purchase of scenic easements from landowners along streams and ridges, the landscaping of our growing supply of rubbish to provide parks and hills, the reclamation of sand and gravel pits and quarries. Individually, no one approach can accomplish much, but together they open up exciting opportunities.

Many experts criticize such attention to detail as palliative, a microview that obscures the need for a bold restructuring of the metropolis. Others damn such measures with the epithets "cosmetic" and "prettification"; and there is never a conference on the subject but some hero doesn't stand up and say we have to get down to basics, and, gentlemen, planting trees and creating small parks won't solve the root problems of poverty.

And indeed it won't. Let us just say that trees are nice to have. Such measures do not add up to the grand-sweep approach to urban design, but they have the advantage of practicality. The opportunities can be seized now, and have to be if they are to be seized at all. Let us, in sum, plan for today. As for the landscape of the year 2000, our grandchildren can take it from there.

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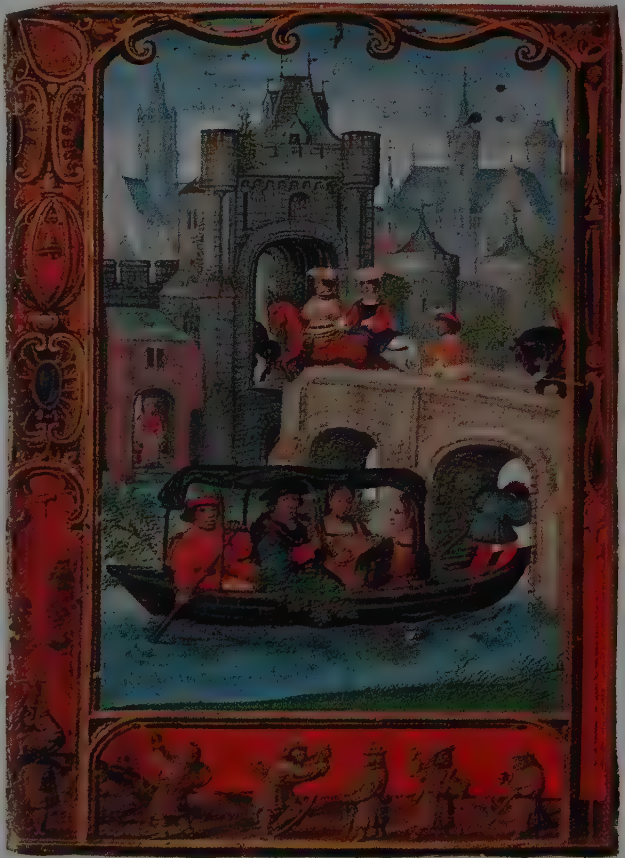
*William H. Whyte, best known as the author of* The Organization Man, *has become an expert in conservation matters. The theme of this article is developed in his new book* The Last Landscape.

# The Life and Death of Bruges



*A sixteenth-century boating party passes under a bridge on a Bruges canal. The miniature is reproduced in actual size from a Book of Hours.*

BY COURTESY OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUS

*What the tides created, the tides destroyed, leaving a silt-bound city that has hardly changed since the time of its glory as a trading port of the Middle Ages*

If Bruges had not existed, it might have been invented by the Neo-Gothics of the nineteenth century. Its significant paintings are genuinely Pre-Raphaelite, its urban prospects picturesque, and its appeal to the literary mind certain. Nearly all of its architecture exemplifies Ruskin's sixth principle, the Lamp of Memory.

More precisely, Bruges is the best town in Belgium, perhaps in western Europe, for a traveler who yearns to forget the industrial revolution. A network of quiet canals mirrors masses of foliage, flowers, and Flemish brickwork. Gulls come in from the North Sea, nine miles away, and Lohengrinesque swans sometimes cruise by moonlight, materializing suddenly around bends of dark water. There are venerable spires, twilit naves, fortified gates, street after street of quaintly gabled façades, and some fifty bridges, many of them with Gothic humps. The municipal Belfry has swallows and a carillon.

The cityscape is preternaturally close to what it was at the end of the Middle Ages. A visitor to the Groeninge Museum, where part of the local collection of Flemish masterpieces is kept, can find in paintings of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries the same perspectives and landmarks he has just admired from the canal quays outside. With the help of the entertainingly detailed Gheeraerts panorama (pages 78–79) he can plan his sightseeing much as if time had stopped in 1562, when the map was drawn.

Bruges, however, is not only the pocket Venice of the North and a fascinating entry for an account of romantic nostalgia in architecture. It is also the Pompeii of the North, minus the rain of hot ashes. Or, seen in the touristless winter, it is the urban equivalent of one of those sad Siberian mammoths, frozen in the posture of the moment when things went fatally wrong. And the record—in chronicles, art, and economic data—of the life and death of the brilliant medieval town can be read more as a classical tragedy, complete with classical

*By* ROY McMULLEN

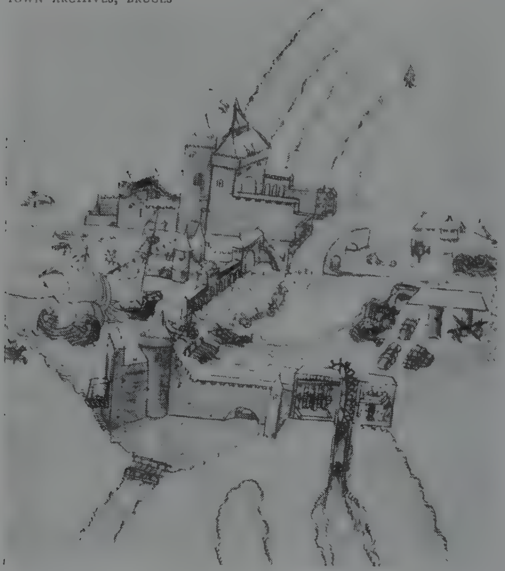
*hubris*, than as a romantic idyll. One has only to accept the non-Aristotelian notion that businessmen can be both heroic and tragically flawed.

The name Bruges is sometimes attributed to a Roman bridge over the Rei, a stream that is still, in a canalized form, one of the town's principal and prettiest waterways. But a more probable derivation is from a Germanic word, Norse or possibly Old English, meaning "landing place." In any case that is apparently what Bruges was in the ninth century, although its access to open water seems to have been ominously subject to the North Sea's habit of biting at random into the flat Flemish coast. The place was also a crossroads and, after 865, the site of a castle built by Baldwin Iron Arm, Count of Flanders. It grew into a small commercial center during the next two centuries, when European trade in general was recovering from the long depression provoked by the pagan incursions.

Then, probably in 1134, the local merchants had a piece of luck that must have seemed a sign of heavenly approval of their theoretically un-Christian profit making. A tidal wave, strong enough to wash away dikes and bore channels through silt, transformed the previously eccentric Zwin estuary into a gulf of the North Sea that extended south to a point about four miles northeast of Bruges. During the last quarter of the twelfth century a well-equipped foreport, called Damme, was constructed at this point and linked by a canal and the Rei to the heart of the walled inland city.

Sea captains had to be careful, for the Zwin channels soon showed a tendency to silt up again. Large ships were obliged to transfer their cargoes to barges and scows for the trip through the canal and the Rei. But throughout the High Middle Ages the merchandise got through—coal, cheese, and above all wool from England; furs from Russia and the Baltic kingdoms by way of Lübeck; wine from Poitou and the Rhenish vineyards; metal from the Balkan states; alum, used as a binder in dyeing, from Islam and eventually the Papal States; fruit from Moorish Spain; fine fabrics from Italy; spices from the Orient; and even an occasional load of slaves.

TOWN ARCHIVES, BRUGES



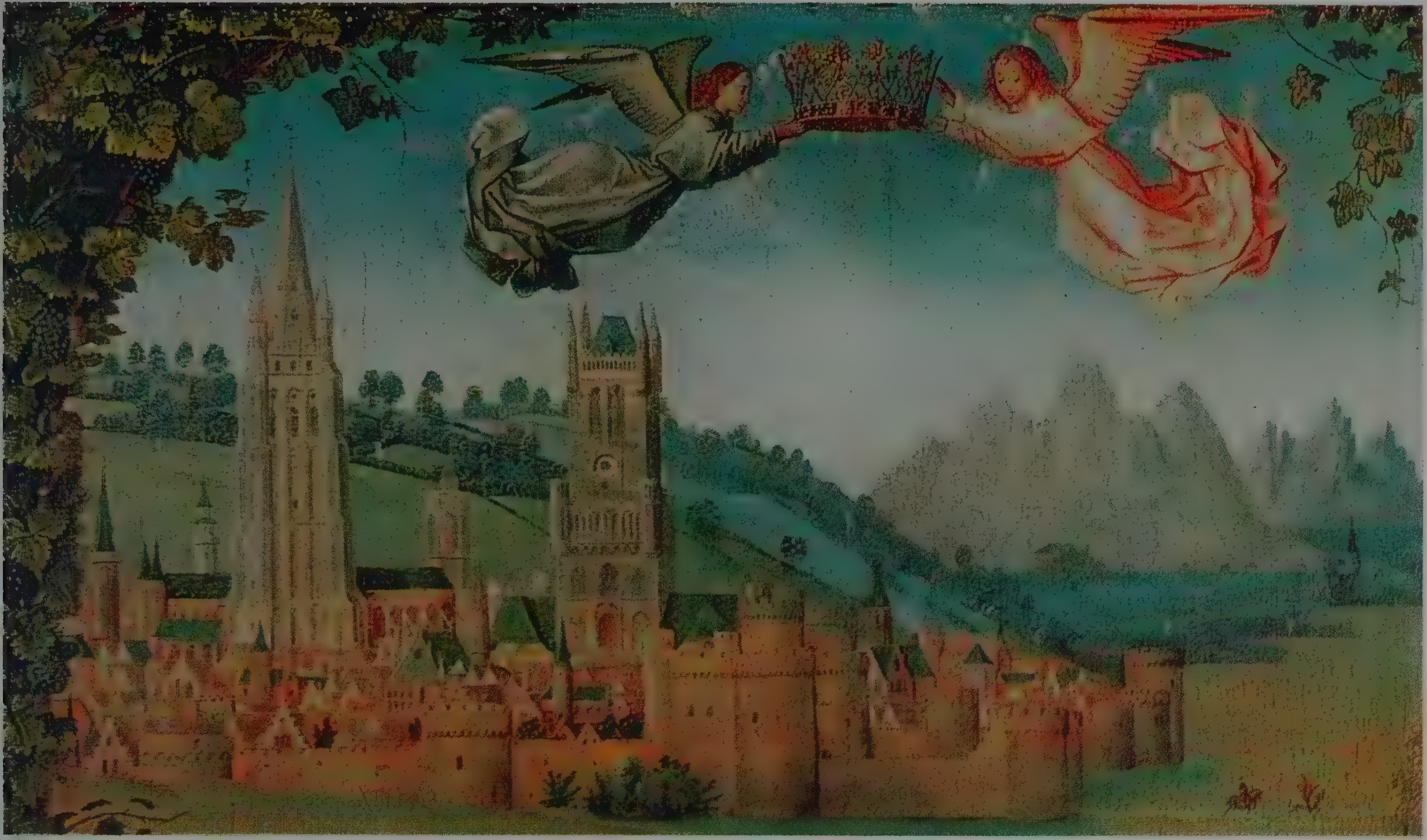
*The Porte de Damme, Bruges's main gate, is seen in a detail from a drawing done before 1500. To the left of the double gate is a canal from the Zwin estuary, which linked Bruges to the North Sea. To the right of the gate is the Rei, the stream that bore cargo boats from the Zwin to the center of town. The sketched-in waterways above and below the gate indicate the city's system of encircling moats.*

Bruges became the western emporium of the Hanseatic association organized by the free German cities; the favorite Continental port of the English, who during most of the period governed large sections of France; the successor to Champagne as an organizer of trade fairs; and in general the chief pivot of commerce between the Mediterranean and northern Europe. Guesses at its population (which hovers around 50,000 today) in the fourteenth century run as high as 150,000, with 50,000 more sometimes added for Damme. These figures are probably grossly exaggerated, but even if we halve them we are left with a big city by medieval standards: London as late as the fifteenth century seems to have had only about 40,000 inhabitants.

Given the complicated and frequently dangerous problems that confronted traffic on the Zwin, the Rei, and the canals, such a tremendous and enduring boom can look mysterious. A simple explanation is that Bruges, well fortified and provided with at least some exchange facilities for foreigners, was already a physical reality when the Zwin opened up; in the Middle Ages, as Lewis Mumford has pointed out, existing cities created trade at least as much as trade created cities. A more elaborate and more important explanation is that Flanders was one of the earliest and most active manufacturing regions of non-Mediterranean Europe, specializing in the making of cloth from English wool but also producing bricks, tiles, linen, and red dye. A merchant of Venice, Genoa, Barcelona, London, or Lübeck who sent a cargo to Bruges could be sure his ship would return with marketable goods.

Another explanation is that the burghers of Bruges firmly believed that *will*

*The Virgin of the Rose Garden;* THE DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS



*The fortresslike city was depicted about 1480 in the background of a painting by the anonymous Bruges artist known as the Master of the St. Lucy Legend. On the left rises the spire of the Church of Notre-Dame, whose nave dates back to 1210. To its right is the Bruges Belfry, which the citizenry used as a fire watch. In an otherwise factually precise portrait of the city the distant mountains are pure fantasy.*

can make history—at least economic history. In their great period they fought untiringly, with carefully situated dikes and with some fantastic attempts to control the tide so as to deepen the channels, against the filtering sand and mud that constantly menaced their life line to the sea. Less admirably, they were alert to the opportunities for monopoly offered by the rigid medieval system of corporations, guilds, charters, and special trading privileges granted by feudal authorities. They saw to it, for instance, that their foreport of Damme, despite its size, never developed the variety of enterprises needed by a rival independent city.

They were always ready to use force. They attempted, although without success, to maintain a local weaving monopoly by organizing loom-smashing forays into the surrounding territory. They resorted to a flaming punitive raid when Sluis, the little seaport (inland today) at the entrance to the Zwin, not unnaturally thought of doing some trading on its own. During the French occupation of 1302, which was a threat to the supply of English wool in addition to being an affront to local patriotism—the Count of Flanders, although nominally a vassal of the French king, was in practice usually his own sovereign—they staged the Matins of Bruges, slaughtering all who could not pronounce the Flemish *Schild en Vriend* (shield and friend).

Strangely, in the midst of so many bloody quarrels the physical plant of Bruges was never subjected to a particularly destructive attack (nor did it sustain any serious damage in later wars, including those of the present century). One of the few important medieval campaigns in which it may have risked an eventual sack followed the Matins massacre and ended at Courtrai, thirty miles to the south. There, in the Battle of the Golden Spurs—so called because of the quantity of such trophies carried off the field—an army of some 20,000 Flemish militiamen, with the weavers of Bruges forming the largest contingent, defeated a French army of some 50,000 and wiped out a large section of the French aristocracy.

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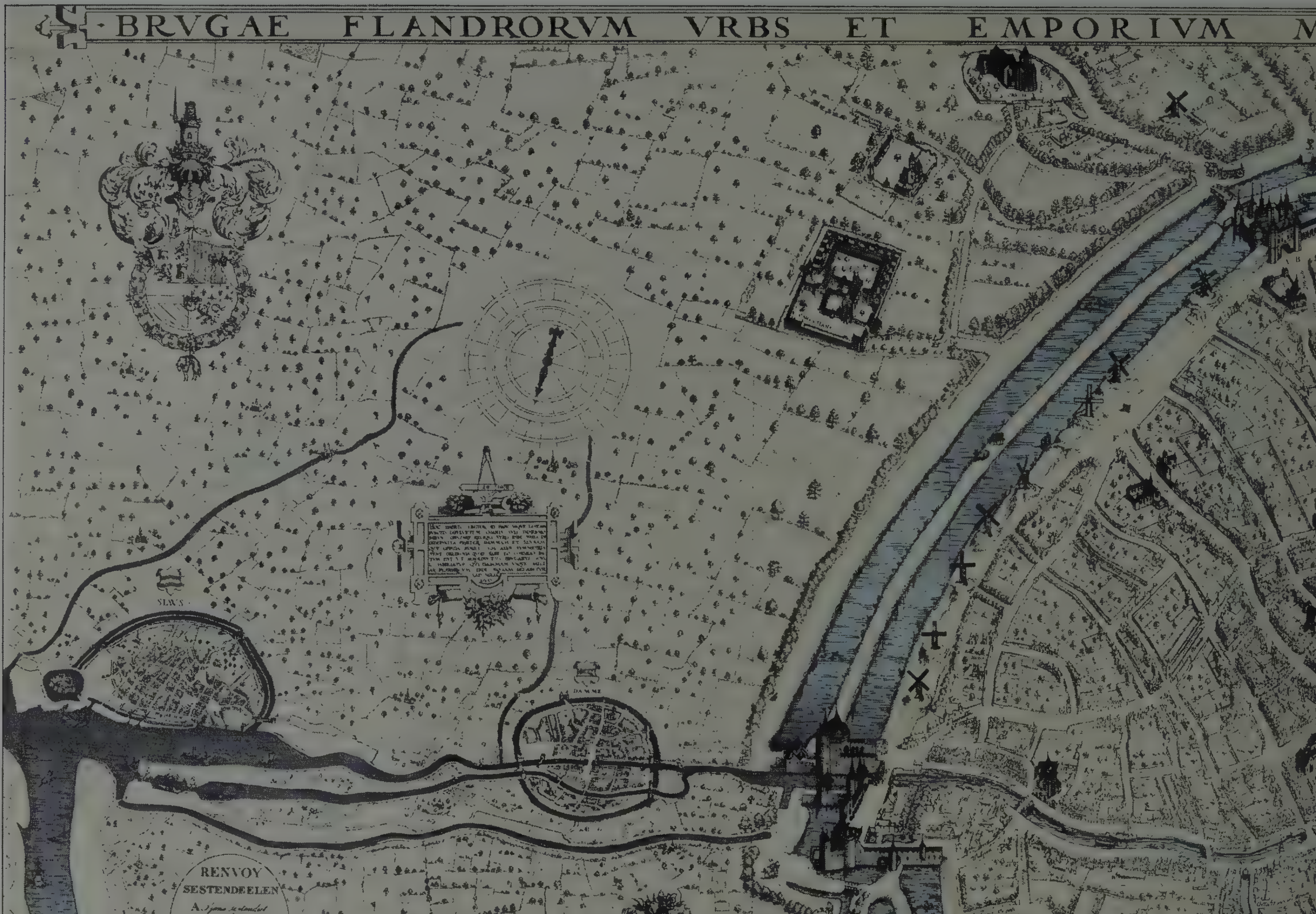
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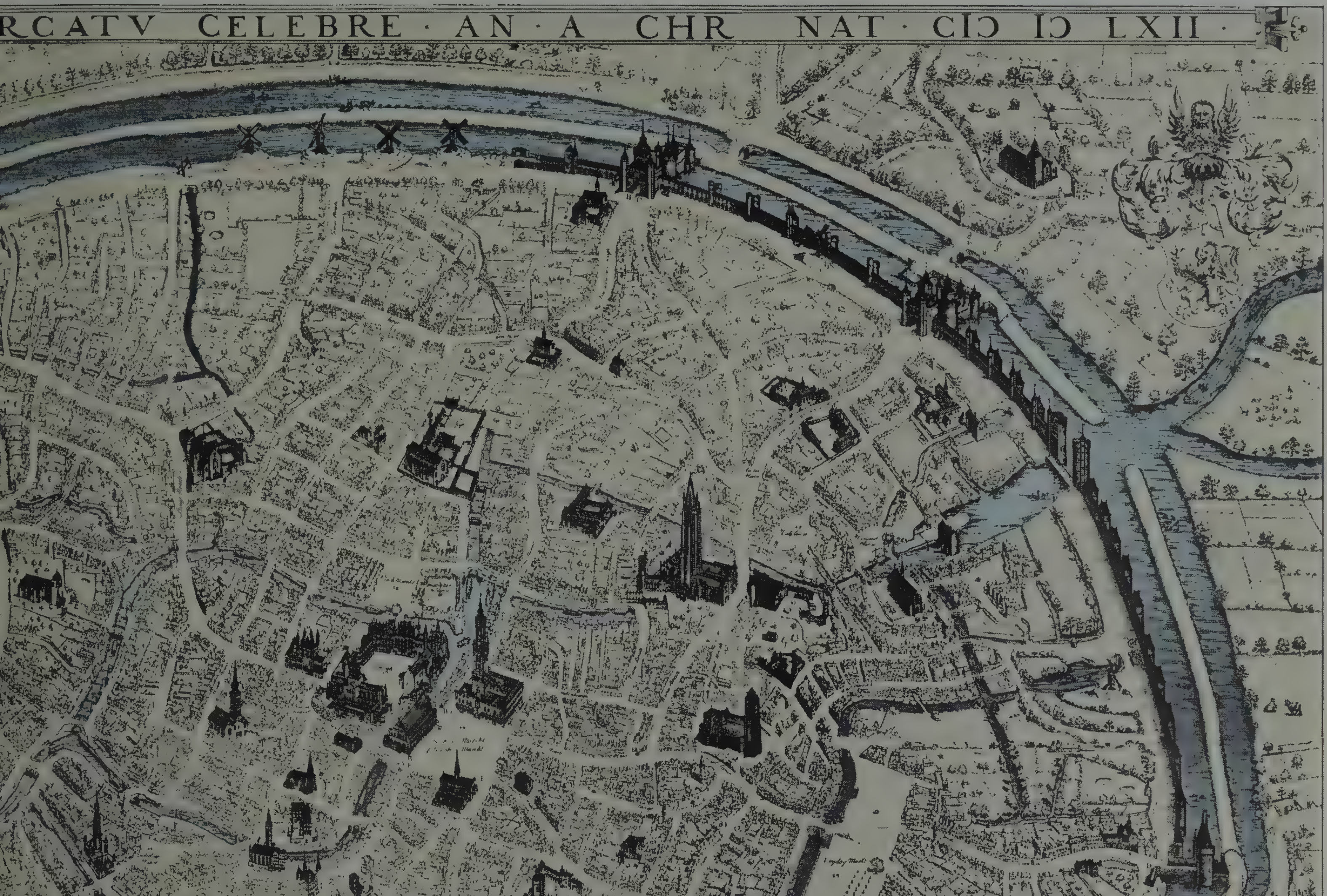
INDICATION D'APRÈS LES Nos PORTÉS SUR LA CARTE DES ENDROITS LES PLUS REMARQUABLES DE L'ÉPOQUE DE 1562
1562

*Marc Gheeraerts's map of Bruges, drawn in 1562, shows the town nestled within its double belt of moatlike canals. The body of water at the lower left is the Zwin estuary, considerably exaggerated in size because the town fathers, hoping to revive the city's trade, stipulated that the artist depict it as broader than it really was. The dark, curving*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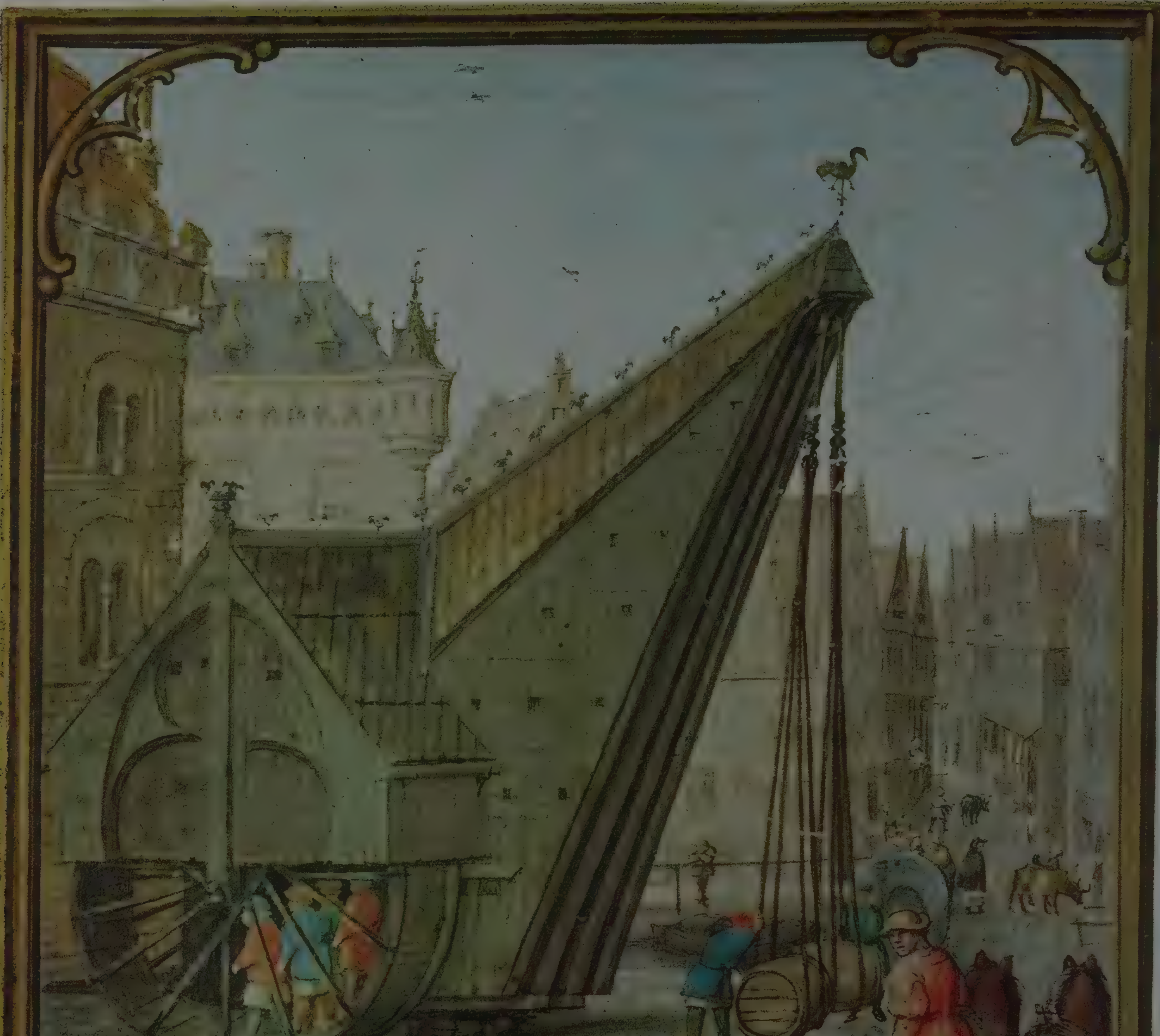
*avenues traversing the city are Bruges's elaborate network of interior canals. At the center of the oval-shaped city is the square, surrounded by a tall rampart of buildings, that was known as the Burg, residence of the Counts of Flanders. The Belfry stands to its right, while the adjacent space below the Belfry is the market square, or Grand' Place.*

BAYERISCHE STAATSBIBLIOTHEK, MUNICH



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This event is often presented, by writers who take a Whig view of history, as a victory of the common man over the forces of reaction; and perhaps it was. But what impresses a reader of the old accounts is the savagery of the Flemish foot. Armed with heavy staffs and razor-sharp pikes, they caught a company of about a thousand French knights on marshy terrain, clubbed them from their saddles, and dispatched them while they lay helpless in the mud. The watching French host, demoralized by this unchivalric lack of quarter, took to its heels. Then "those of Bruges," according to *La Grande Chronique de Saint-Denis,* stripped the dead and "went back to Bruges in great joy," letting "carrion-eaters, birds, dogs, and beasts of the field devour the poor, noble bodies left naked on the plain."

At this point such single-minded courage, tenacity, and ferocity, in both business and politics and against both silt and seigneurs, had begun to pay off fabulously. The burghers of Bruges and their wives were becoming notorious for their wealth and their readiness to display it on their persons and in their homes. When Jeanne de Navarre, the French queen, made her royal entry in 1301 (the story is significant even if apocryphal), she is said to have remarked rather cattily: "I thought I was the only queen, but I see hundreds of them." Later in the century Chaucer gives us, in Sir Thopas, a portrait of a young Flemish blade whom we can legitimately imagine strolling on the banks of the Rei or parading in the great square of the Markt:

> His heer, his berd was lyk saffroun,
> That to his girdel raughte adoun;
>   His shoon of Cordewane.
> Of Brugges were his hosen broun,
> His robe was of ciclatoun,
>   That coste many a jane.

The poor existed, of course, and they were kept poor by a ruthless oligarchy of rich merchants who, except during brief periods of popular revolt, governed the town in the interest of the top class. But a large number of ordinary artisans seem to have prospered along with the traders. We are told that even the smaller homes had their silver plate.

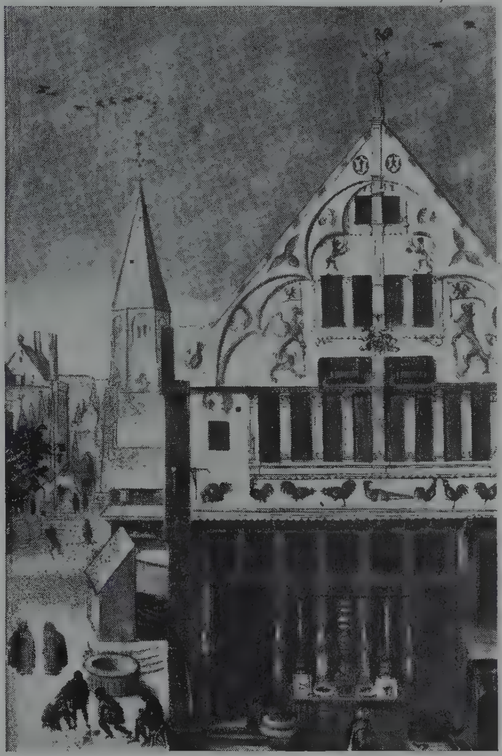
A revolution in commercial methods was contributing to the town's prosperity. The merchant in Chaucer's *Shipmannes Tale,* who lived near Paris and who on a warm summer day

> Shoop him to make redy his array
> Toward the toun of Brugges for to fare,
> To byën ther a porcioun of ware . . .

was behind the times. Trade for a man of his importance was becoming a sedentary activity, enormously facilitated by one of the most notable of medieval inventions: the bill of exchange. Although this invention was largely Italian, a share of the glory for its use and development should certainly go to Bruges; and the elegantly Gothic business building called Ter Beurze, recently restored, fittingly enough, by a modern bank, is one of the city's several visible reminders of this fact—without being, as local folk etymologists like to pretend, the reason European stock exchanges are called bourses.

In 1384 the dukes of Burgundy acquired Flanders by marriage, and within a generation they were treating Bruges as a northern seat only slightly less important than their southern one at Dijon. Partly owing to the frequent presence of their court, the town entered the golden era of its cultural history. The brightest decades coincided with the long reign, from 1419 to 1467, of Duke Philip the Good, but there was a fine afterglow that lasted through the

GROENINGE MUSEUM, BRUGES



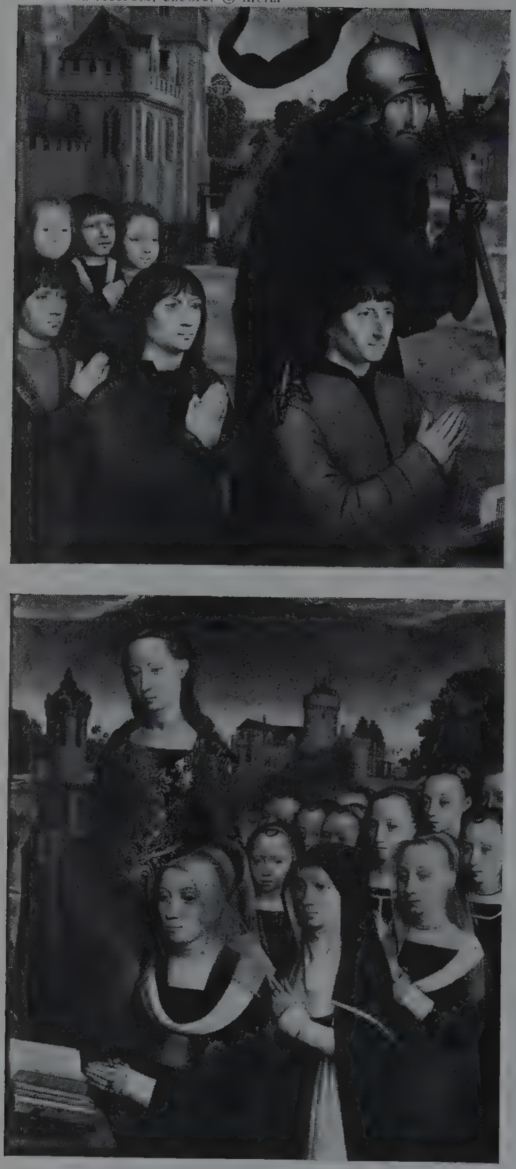
*The house known as Ten Hane, above, belonging to a merchant, appeared as a detail in a 1551 portrait of a resident of Bruges. A vendor displayed his wares on a table set up in the street. Ten Hane stood a few hundred yards from Bruges's main market. Close by was the Grue, or Town Crane, shown opposite in a sixteenth-century miniature as it unloads wine kegs from Rei barges. An object of great pride to the medieval citizens, the machine was powered by a human treadmill.*

time of his son Charles the Bold, 1467 to 1477, and well into the post-Burgundian complexity of Habsburg times.

Simply to name some of the painters working in Bruges during this period—Jan van Eyck, Petrus Christus, Hans Memling, Gerard David—is to realize how close the place was to emerging from the Middle Ages and flowering into a Renaissance rival of Florence and Venice. Indeed, it was for many years far ahead of the Italian cities in terms of technical innovation and of sheer skill at fooling the eye with painted images. Although the legend that Van Eyck invented the oil medium can no longer be credited, there is no doubt that he was the first major artist to realize its potential for magic realism.

The music of the fifteenth century cannot be localized in the way the painting of the period can, since composers tended to travel with their patrons and to change patrons frequently. Many of the strongest talents, however, were Flemish, and Bruges led an active musical life, both with its own resources and with those of the Burgundian court. The Church of St. Donatien (stupidly demolished at the end of the eighteenth century) ran a singing school in which gifted boys were taught without tuition if they happened to be poor. Gilles Binchois, whose learned charm has attracted some attention from record companies, served the ducal establishment, and a painting by Van Eyck bears the title of one of his songs. Duke Philip and Charles the Bold both played the harp, and Charles, instructed by the great Guillaume Dufay, became a competent composer of motets. Even a rich merchant could have his musical side: Giovanni Arnolfini, who made a fortune in silk and alum and became the subject of one of Van Eyck's best known pictures, had originally come up from Lucca to Flanders as a wandering singer.

GROENINGE MUSEUM, BRUGES: © A.C.L.



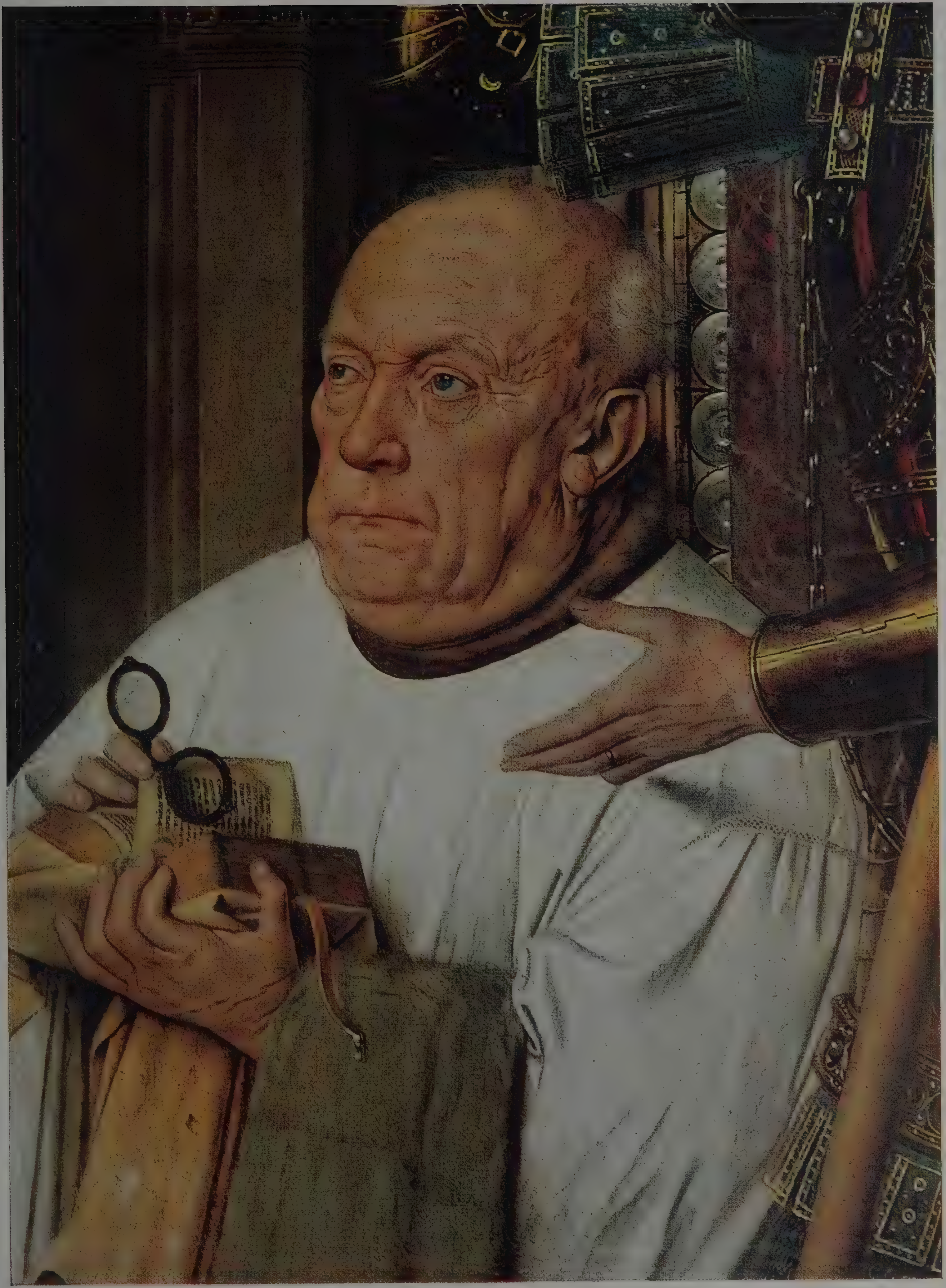
*Prominent figures in fifteenth-century Bruges included Guillaume Moreel, spice merchant and burgomaster, a position he achieved in 1483. In the top picture Moreel is shown with his five sons in a side panel of a triptych he commissioned from Memling. Below them Moreel's wife and eleven daughters appear in the same work. Opposite is a portrait of George van der Peale, canon of the Cathedral of Bruges, holding his missal and spectacles. The portrait is a detail from a memorial altarpiece by Jan van Eyck, who died in the city of Bruges in 1441.*

The burghers seem never to have thought of having a local university or of founding anything like the Florentine academy; they were interested in more practical kinds of education. There does appear, however, to have been some demand for books—or at least William Caxton thought there was. In 1474, after more than thirty years in the Low Countries as a member of the English trading colony, he and a Bruges illuminator named Colard Mansion set up a press in the city, and the next year they published *The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye*, the first book printed in English.

The architecture can be judged from the Gheeraerts panorama. There were no masterpieces by individual creators, but there was a strong feeling for style: for the international, basically French, Gothic style in a church like Notre-Dame (more correctly called, since Bruges is in an officially Flemish-speaking province, *Onze Lieve Vrouw ter Reye*); for a Low Countries' late medieval style in such structures as the Poortersloge, where the privileged merchants met, and the Belfry, symbol of burgher pride (along with the swans, which in the Middle Ages were supposedly reserved for noble owners); and for a Bruges style, in domestic buildings in particular, that was characterized by narrow, gabled, vertically accented street façades and long files of rooms running straight back from the façades. The rooms away from the street windows must have been depressingly dark, since the houses were huddled together in most quarters. But they were relatively easy to keep warm, and they encouraged a neighborly habit (which has persisted) of working on the front doorstep whenever the chore and the weather were suitable.

The town plan was at once organic and rational. From the Markt, or Grand' Place, the principal streets meandered out pleasantly toward smaller squares and eventually the fortified gates in the city wall. Thanks to the canals, heavy transport and pedestrian traffic were kept separate; the barges from Damme were unloaded at the Markt, directly beneath the vast Water-

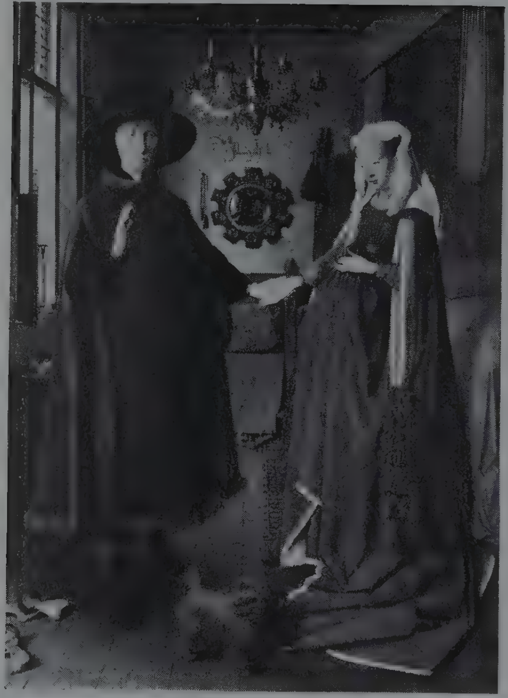
GROENINGE MUSEUM, BRUGES



halle (demolished in 1786), a warehouse straddling the Rei. The urban image was beautifully legible: there was always a visible spire, tower, square, or waterway to tell a person where he was and to remind him of the pattern of the whole city. And the image was kept fairly clean and safe, at least by medieval standards. The streets had been paved since 1285, litterers were punished by law, special police killed stray dogs, and fire wardens stationed in the Belfry sounded the tocsin when they spotted a flame. A combination of subsidies and penalties encouraged homeowners to convert thatched roofs to tiled.

Bruges, I have said, has changed physically very little since the Middle Ages. But of course it is like a theatre with a closed play. We cannot fully appreciate its streets, façades, and Gothic interiors in the absence of the movement, color, noise, and people that animated them in the fifteenth century.

NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON



*Giovanni Arnolfini and his Flemish bride were portrayed by Van Eyck in 1434 when Arnolfini, one of the many Italian merchants in Bruges, had already made his fortune in the city by trading in silks, velvets, furs, and works of art. Less than a century later the great foreign trade of Bruges had vanished, never to return.*

OPPOSITE AND OVERLEAF: *In the tranquillity of present-day Bruges the steep, gabled roofs of the Béguinage, a religious home for pious "widows and maidens," overlook the silent cobbled street as they have done for seven centuries. Overleaf, the inner courtyard of the Béguinage, a uniquely Belgian institution, preserves a flowered pastoral space within the close medieval setting of Bruges. Once a retreat from the city's bustling worldliness, the Béguinage today has come to epitomize the unworldly seclusion of the city of Bruges itself.*

We must try to imagine the interminable mystery dramas, whose disjointed treatment of time and space clearly influenced Flemish painting; the religious processions, with the bells ringing all day long; the twenty chivalric tournaments, charged with allegories of love and cloth of gold, staged by the Burgundians in the Markt; the Lombard moneylenders, scurrying under the arcades with their little tables; the weavers, fingering the stout wool cloth on display; the robed monks, some of whom formed the municipal fire department; the shouts of the bargemen at the Waterhalle; and everywhere the babel of nearly all the tongues of Europe—by 1429 the city buzzed with commercial representatives, many with their own buildings, from thirty-four countries.

Two of the most spectacular occasions of the century were wedding celebrations: that of Philip the Good and Isabella of Portugal in 1430, and that of Charles the Bold and Margaret of York in 1468. Philip used the splendid setting for the announcement that he had just founded the Order of the Golden Fleece (in memory, according to disrespectful commentators, of the profit in wool). Charles put on a banquet that lasted for several days and filled pages and pages of Burgundian chronicles. To work on the setting, painters were summoned to Bruges from Ghent, Brussels, Louvain, Tirlemont, Mons, Quesnoy, Valenciennes, Douai, Cambrai, Arras, Lille, Ypres, Courtrai, and Oudenarde. The table decorations included such marvels as a sculptured tower forty-six feet high, a lifelike whale with forty people in it, birds flying from the mouth of a dragon, four wolves playing flutes, and Madame de Beaugrant, a female dwarf, dressed as a shepherdess and riding a golden lion.

We must try to imagine also the women of Bruges. There were rich matrons, with smooth brows and hooded eyes, of the type favored by Memling; plainly disagreeable housewives like the Margareta van Eyck painted by her husband; languid damsels in the mode of Gerard David; and of course working mothers who could not afford the immortality of art. Jerome Münzer, a German doctor who visited the city in 1494, noted: "The women are very beautiful, with small bodies; they dress well, often in a very bright red; they are very inclined toward love and just as much toward religion, for in these northwest regions people go to extremes, all or nothing . . . " One wonders if, undressed, many of them really looked like the long-stemmed, bulbous nudes in Flemish painting; and apparently finding out would not have been difficult. A Spanish visitor in 1438 was surprised by the mixed bathing in public bathhouses, which "they take to be as honest as church-going with us."

Several of the prominent men of the period have for us a reality the women seldom achieve. In addition to his strange, somnambulistic Arnolfini in a preposterous hat, Van Eyck gives us the canon George van der Peale, in whose

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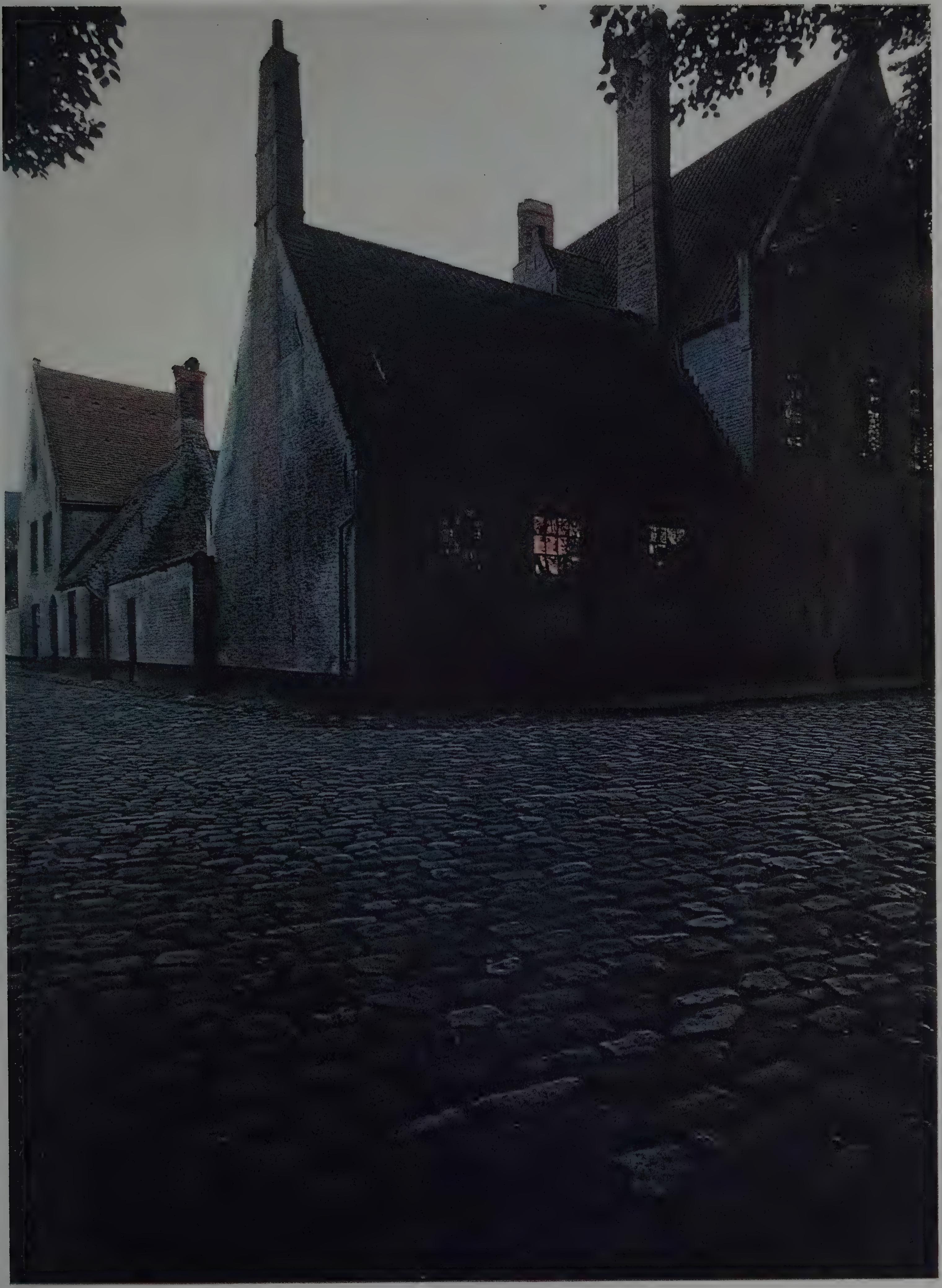
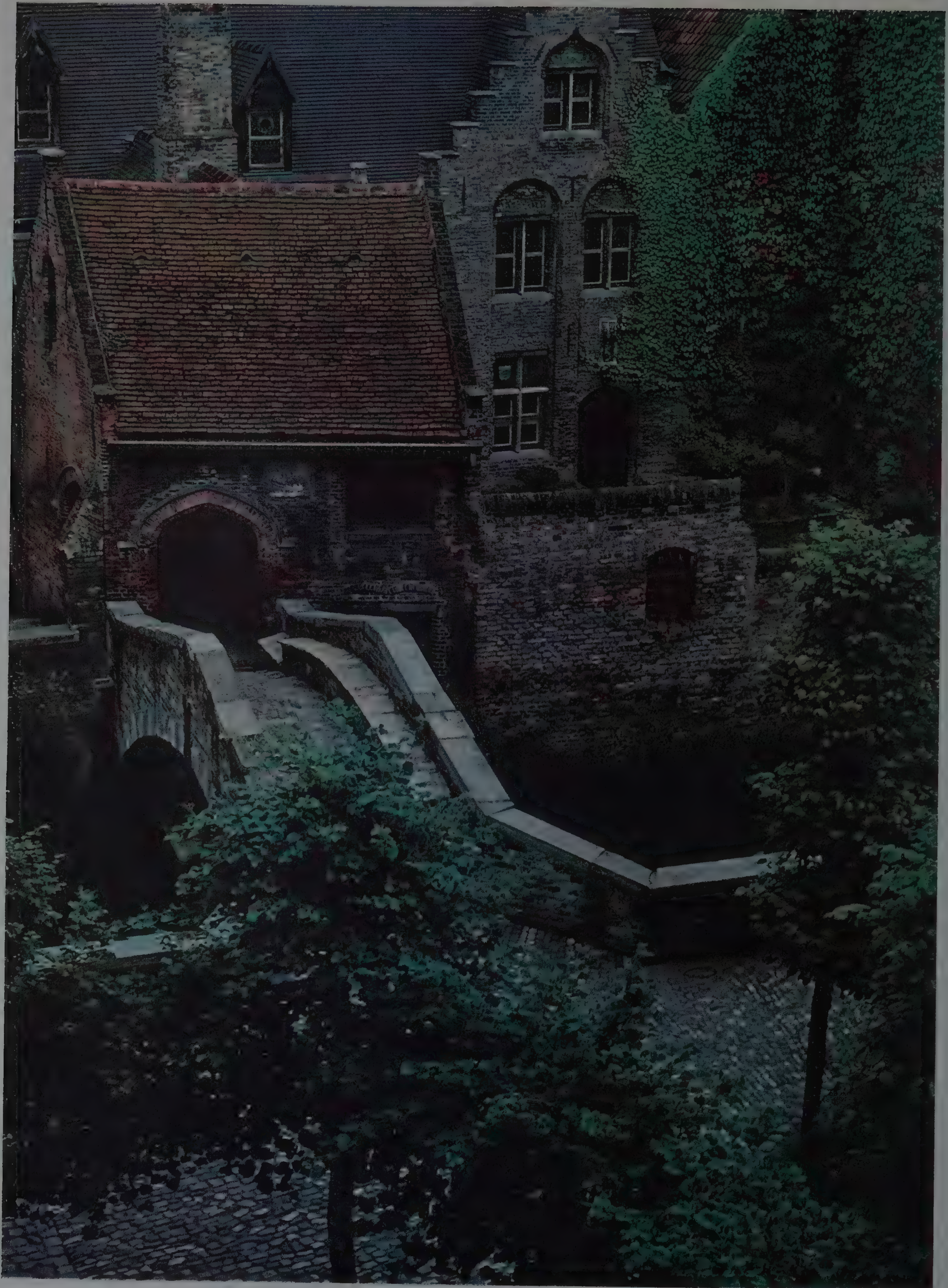
MALCOLM KIRK



PIERRE BERGER—PHOTO RESEARCHERS

MALCOLM KIRK



TEXT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 84

huge meaty face we can read the whole story of Bruges—the toughness, the energy, the extravagance, the avarice, the piety, the desperate refusal to die. Memling presents notably the spice merchant Guillaume Moreel (with his wife and their sixteen children), a self-made man who became burgomaster in 1483; the English courtier Sir John Donne; the Medici agent Tommaso Portinari; and—according to some authorities—other members of Bruges's Florentine colony, naked and saved, in his *Last Judgment.* (This altarpiece, incidentally, illustrates the hazards of business in the fifteenth century. It was commissioned in Flanders, sent by sea to Florence, intercepted by Hanseatic corsairs, and taken as booty to Danzig, where it still is.)

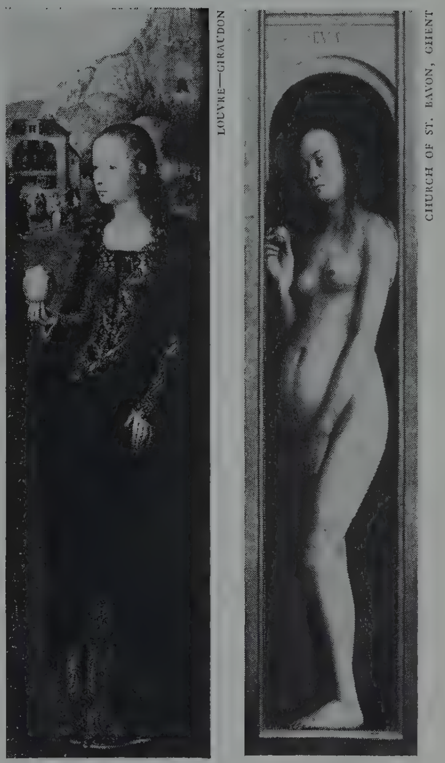
Portinari, who appears also in Hugo van der Goes's masterly *Adoration of the Shepherds,* had a career that would have been possible in few other cities. A descendant of the exiled family of Dante's Beatrice, he entered the Medici firm's branch in Bruges in 1437, when he was twelve. He worked his way up in spices, alum, tapestries, wool cloth, and banking, and in 1465 became the local Medici chief executive. Favored by Charles the Bold in return for substantial loans, he supplanted Arnolfini as a furnisher of silk, bought two galleys with his own money, exported merchandise and art to Italy, and became the local Florentine consul. The death of Duke Charles and a liquidation of the Medici branch nearly ruined him, but he went on to serve as an occasional businessman-diplomat for Maximilian I and for Lorenzo the Magnificent. He managed to keep his Bruges enterprises going until 1496, when he turned them over to his sons and retired to Florence.

Such a career, considered along with the cultural achievements and conspicuous consumption I have been sampling, certainly does not suggest that Bruges was in deep economic trouble during its golden era. I suppose Portinari, who was evidently an exuberant optimist, would have hooted at the notion that his adopted city was dying. And yet the agony was well under way at the very moment when he was investing in galleys and perhaps enjoying the bathhouses—the stews, to use the English term with the right connotation.

Today, looking at the melancholy village of Damme, whose present population is a little more than a thousand, and at the marshy plain that stretches toward the North Sea from this once busy medieval foreport, we can easily conclude that the main cause of the agony was the silt. Year after year the stuff accumulated in the Zwin channels, until finally it became necessary to resort to wagons for part of the trip from the seaport at Sluis. Then the Sluis harbor itself began to fill up enough to discourage prudent mariners, even though the port authority provided specially trained pilots to help them through the last dangerous approaches. Some random surviving statistics on ship arrivals are dismally informative: one hundred and fifty in 1456, seventy-five in 1487, thirty-three in 1499. The accumulation of silt can also be measured by a corresponding drop in wine drinking: the burghers of Bruges appear to have consumed roughly fifteen thousand barrels of Poitou a year at the beginning of the fifteenth century and only two thousand at the end.

Silt, however, was not the only cause of decline. England had tired of its rather colonial status as a supplier of raw material for Flemish manufacturers and had begun to export high-grade cloth instead of wool. Bruges thus was faced simultaneously by a formidable rival in the market for its most important finished product and by a grave lack of raw material for its weavers. Spanish wool was not proving to be a very satisfactory substitute for the English variety; it was inferior in quality and more expensive to import.

There were less specific causes. The tightly controlled European economy



LOUVRE—GIRAUDON

CHURCH OF ST. BAVON, GHENT

*Two prototypical women of old Bruges, whom medieval travelers found to be either pious or permissive, are represented by a demure Magdelene, left, in a panel by Memling and, right, by a wanton-looking Eve painted by Van Eyck. Opposite, in modern Bruges a donkey-backed bridge intersects a cobbled walk at a crossing that has scarcely changed since the days when Bruges's stone bridges and its paved streets were the marvels of northern Europe.*

of the Middle Ages was relaxing into the beginnings of *laissez-faire* capitalism, and the governing merchants of Bruges neither wanted nor understood the change. In 1477, when the foreign trading colony was already unhappy enough, they could think of nothing better to do than to construct a new Tolhuis, or customhouse. Confronted by the rapid rise of Antwerp, where trade was relatively free, they refused to alter their old-fashioned restrictions; instead they tried to halt traffic to the competing port by means of a coastal blockhouse, whose garrison was promptly seized by Antwerp militiamen and sent to the gallows.

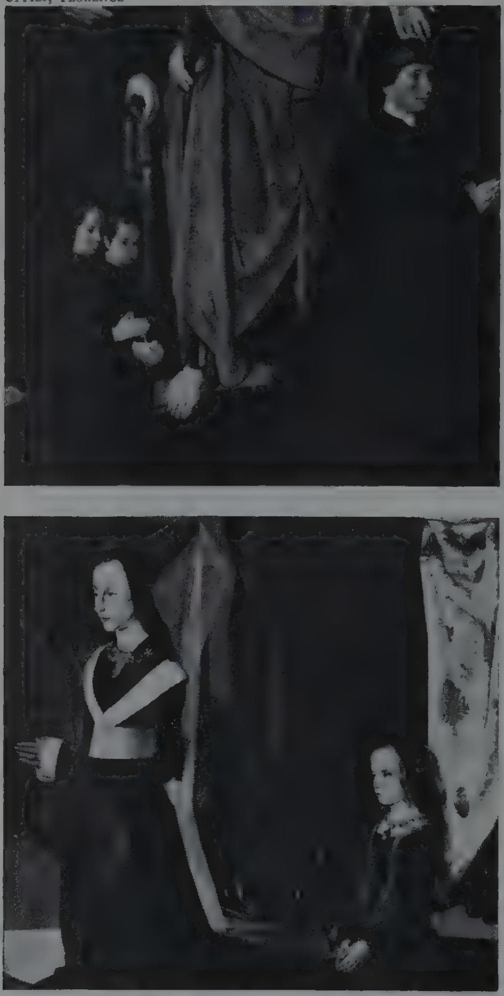
As their confidence ebbed, their ancient fighting ferocity seems to have turned into undisguised sadism. Between 1477 and 1488 there were a hundred and thirty-four executions in the Markt, by rope, fire, axe, boiling oil, breaking on the wheel, and dismemberment with horses; and the crowds are said to have howled their disapproval when the victims were allowed to die too quickly. Something of the sickening cruelty in these spectacles has been preserved in Gerard David's diptych *The Judgment of Cambyses*, one of whose panels depicts the slow flaying of a middle-aged man who is still hideously alive. The picture, now in the Groeninge Museum, was commissioned for the delectation of the city fathers in the Stadhuis, the town hall.

These same city fathers made political mistakes that look like manifestations of a death wish. They antagonized Ghent, their natural ally in the new and hard times that were obviously on the way. In 1488 they seized Maximilian, the future Holy Roman emperor, and locked him up for three months in a house on the Markt. Although Gerard David was sent for to decorate the shutters of the house, the humiliated sovereign proved actively unforgiving: as soon as he was released he officially invited the foreign merchants in the town to move their permanent installations to Antwerp, promising them advantages in addition to those offered by the new port itself.

The majority of them made the move within the next two decades. A municipal remonstrance speaks of five thousand empty houses in 1494. In 1513, according to another random document, not a single ship appeared at the entrance to the Zwin. There were, of course, some spells of hope. In 1521 the town still had enough of its old Burgundian extravagance to welcome Albrecht Dürer with a banquet; he was given, he says in his travel diary, "twelve cans of wine," and then "the whole assembly, more than sixty persons, accompanied me home with many torches." In 1535 it still had enough artistic energy to erect a handsome Renaissance building, the Oude Griffie, in the square where Baldwin Iron Arm's castle had once stood. But by the middle of the sixteenth century the essential Bruges, the vital Bruges of the Middle Ages, was extinct.

During the next three hundred years the site was occupied by a local-market town that seldom had enough forward drive to destroy buildings or put up stylistically clashing new ones. Then came the era of romantic tourism, which was to create a museum-city that, let us gratefully remember, was heralded by poets. Wordsworth, Southey, and Hugo were among those who discovered the place fairly early in the nineteenth century. Longfellow arrived in 1842, climbed to the top of the Belfry (402 steps) at five o'clock on a summer morning, and eventually versified his experience in the best-selling *Belfry of Bruges*. "How much," he told his diary that evening, "to remember!"

UFFIZI, FLORENCE



*An agent of the Medici during Bruges's era of prosperity, Tommaso Portinari, top, appears in the left panel of the* Adoration of the Shepherds, *which he commissioned from Hugo van der Goes around the year 1476. From the same triptych are Portinari's wife and daughter. On the opposite page bold medieval flags with lions rampant flutter over the Grand' Place as a surviving reminder of long-past glories.*

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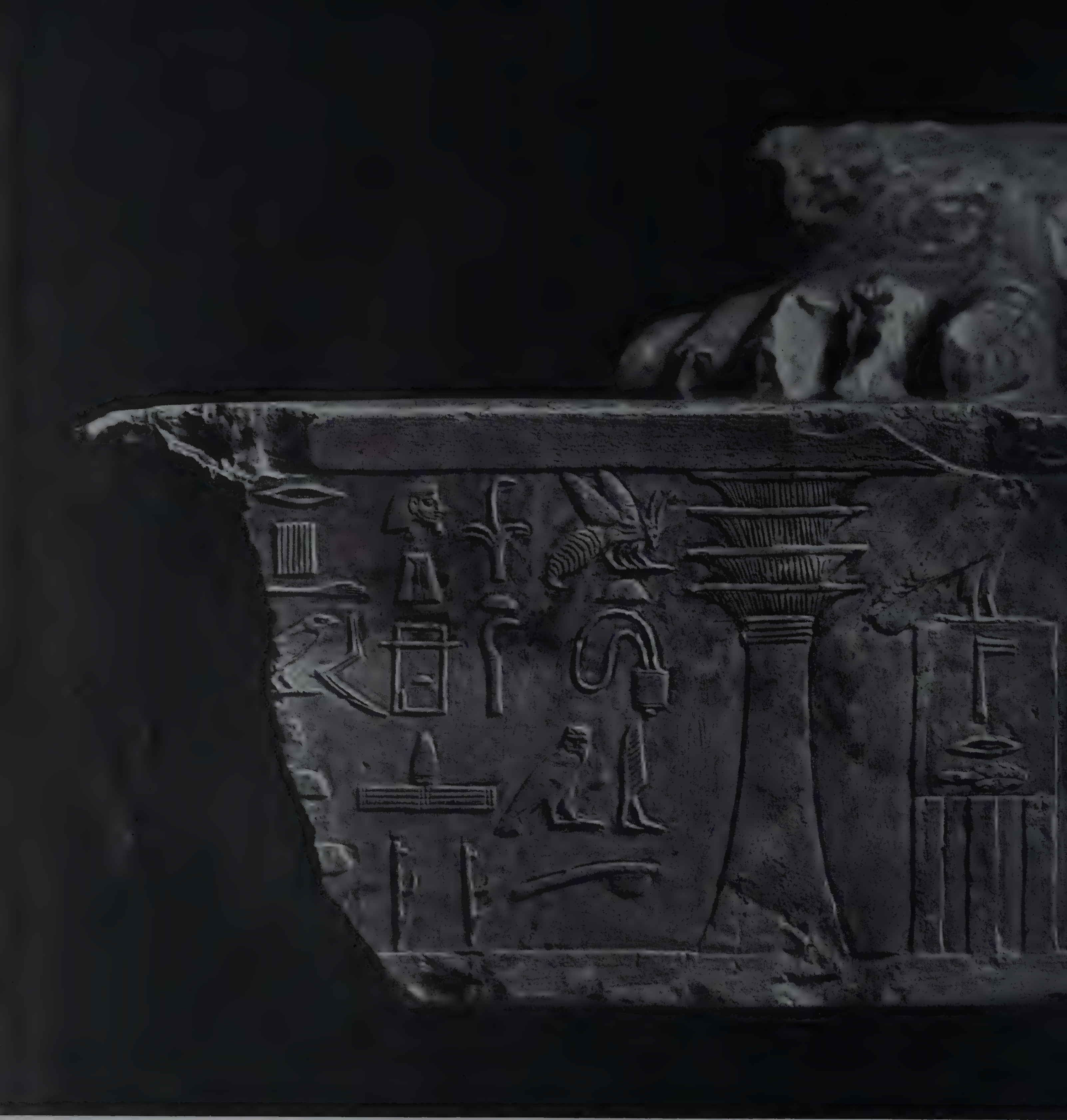
*Roy McMullen often travels the Continent for* HORIZON. *For the Spring, 1969, issue he went to the south of France to ponder "The Lascaux Puzzle."*

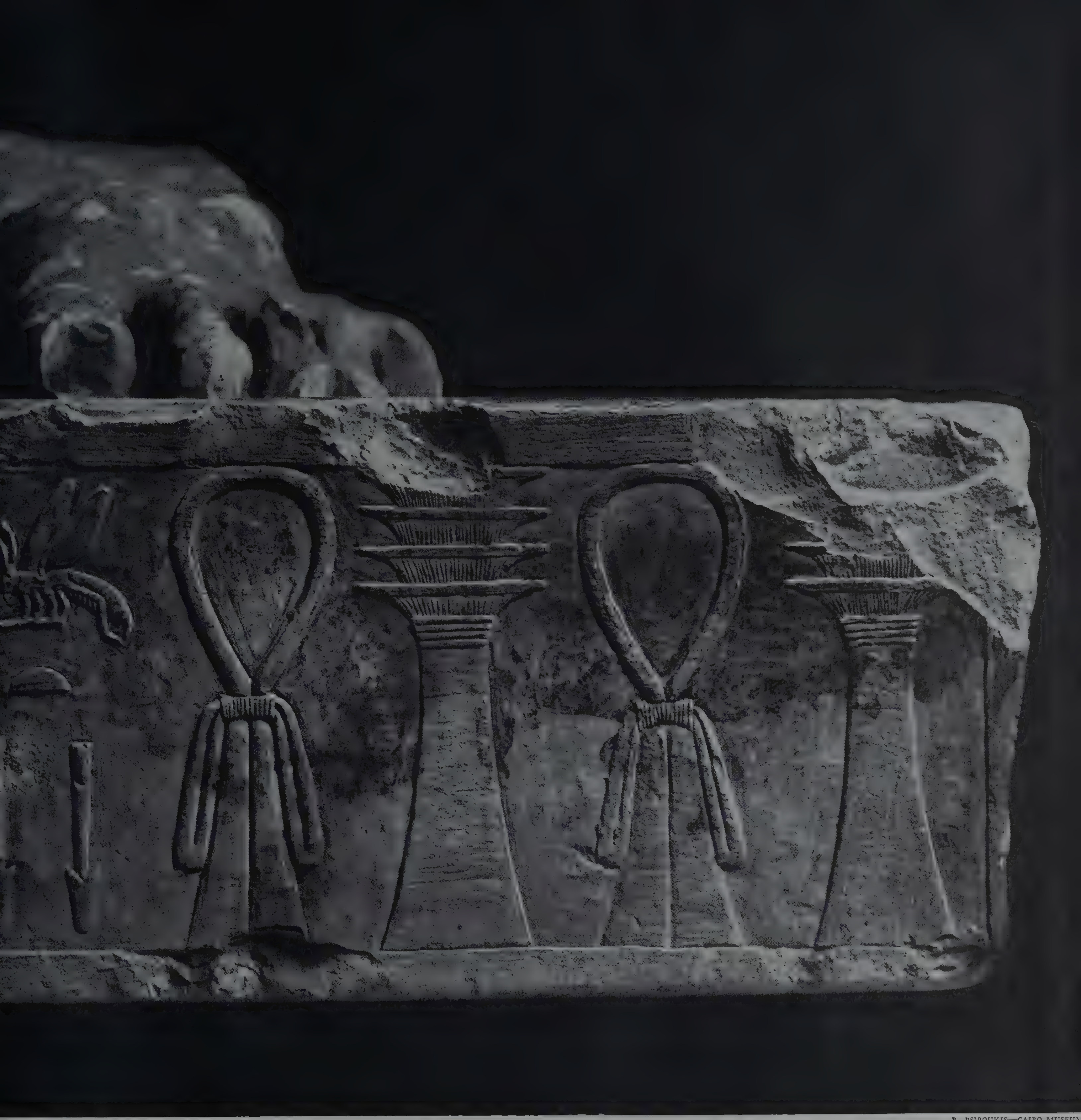
DMITRI KESSEL © *Life* MAGAZINE



*The feet are all that remain of a huge statue of Pharaoh Zoser, but the hieroglyphs on the base prove that Imhotep existed and*

# IMHOTEP

*By* LIONEL CASSON



B. PSIROUKIS—CAIRO MUSEUM

*was Zoser's grand vizier. Imhotep's name, at lower left, consists of a mat with an offering, an owl, and a reed with two legs*

Egyptologists seek the tomb of the first known universal genius. Pharaoh Zoser's grand vizier was not only an architect, engineer, and inventor of the pyramid but administrator, sage, and healer of the sick. Posterity made him a god

LEE BOLTIN—METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

ELIOT ELISOFON

*The posthumous fame of Imhotep grew into a cult, and the seven-inch statue opposite, of the third century* B.C., *is one of many that show him as a demigod. The Step Pyramid at Sakkara, right, was the major work of this great architect and is the oldest stone monument in the world.*

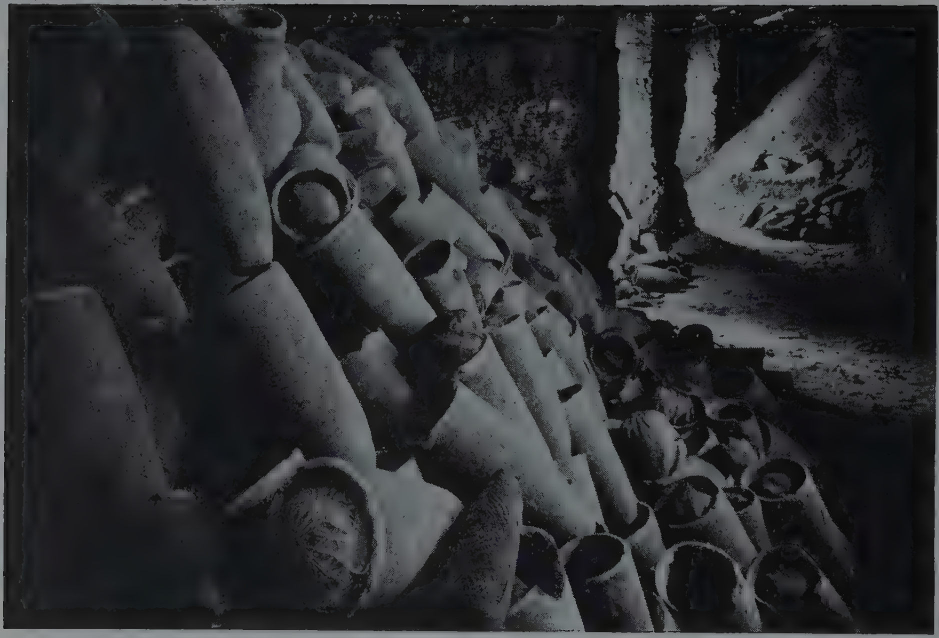
The Great Pyramids, those Brobdingnagian tombstones of the Pharaohs of the Fourth Dynasty, who ruled from 2613 to 2494 B.C., stand at the edge of the modern city of Cairo, so close that you merely take the Giza streetcar to the end of the line to get to them. About twenty miles away, surrounded by the solitude of the open desert, is the burial ground at Sakkara, where the members of the earlier dynasties lie. The landmark of the site is Egypt's first pyramid—the one made in a series of steps—which marks the grave of the founder of the Third Dynasty (2686–2613 B.C.), Pharaoh Zoser I. It was erected by his vizier, Imhotep—an architect who conceived of that hallmark of Egypt, the pyramidal monument; an engineer who was the first to abandon mud brick and build buildings all of stone; an administrator who became patron demigod of scribes and bureaucrats; and a man so gifted that later ages credited him with the miraculous power of healing the sick. He has been called at times the "Da Vinci of ancient Egypt," but this accolade leaves out a unique achievement: Leonardo gained recognition as a man of genius; Imhotep became a god.

Egypt embarked on its career in history when, in about 3200 B.C., a certain Narmer united the whole country, founded the First Dynasty of Pharaohs, and established a capital at Memphis, conveniently located at the apex of the Nile delta. Sakkara, on the outskirts, became a royal cemetery, and as the years passed, tomb after tomb went up for various Pharaohs, the members of their families, and the nobles of their courts. To an ancient Egyptian, life on earth was but a prelude to an eternal existence in the hereafter that duplicated the best moments of his mortal career. This he would spend in his tomb; it therefore had to be no mere marker or even mausoleum but a fully equipped house and, for a noble, one that comported with his station. In the days of the early dynasties, the fashionable tomb-house was what Egyptologists call a mastaba, a flat-topped, slope-sided rectangle. Imagine the *Merrimac*, the Confederate navy's famous ironclad, done in mud brick, and you have some idea of what a mastaba looks like from the outside.

Back in the early 1930's Walter B. Emery, of Britain's Egypt Exploration Society, began a series of digs at Sakkara that led to the uncovering of no fewer than fourteen de luxe mastabas belonging to various members of the royal family or magnates of the court. Yet there was a certain magnate who intrigued him above all others, one whose tomb practically every archaeologist at Sakkara had searched for in vain—Imhotep. Pharaoh Zoser lay under the Step Pyramid; surely his vizier must be buried somewhere nearby. And just as surely his burial place would turn out to be not merely a tomb but the nucleus of a vast complex. For Imhotep, more than twenty-five hundred years after his lifetime, had been apotheosized as Egypt's god of medicine and credited with a divine power to heal. Ancient writings mention a great sanctuary he had at Memphis, a combination of temple and sanatorium that from at least 300 B.C. on was the Lourdes of ancient Egypt. What more logical spot for its location than the land made sacred by the presence of his tomb?

So, when Emery resumed operations at Sakkara in 1964 after a lapse of some years, he turned his attention to a valley at the western end of the great burial ground. He had noticed that the surface here was rich in potsherds be-

ALL: EGYPT EXPLORATION SOCIETY



*An intense search for Imhotep's tomb has been under way since 1964. Among the tantalizing evidence that success may be close at hand is the stack of mummified ibises at left, which were found in the underground vaults at Sakkara. These, it is known, were offered in the sixth century* B.C. *to Imhotep the demigod.*

longing to the third century B.C. and later, the time during which the valley of the Nile was under Greek and Roman domination. Why should remains of this date be found in an area devoted almost exclusively to monuments of three thousand to twenty-five hundred years before? His shrewd deduction was that he was on hallowed soil that, with the passage of centuries, had become a place of pilgrimage—perhaps the destination of pilgrims seeking the miraculous aid of Imhotep.

On October 5, 1964, Emery opened his initial campaign. He first uncovered the remains of sacrificed bulls. So far so good: when the sacred bull of Apis died, its successor was brought to the temple of Imhotep to be consecrated. Then mummified ibises began to turn up, each carefully wrapped in bandaging that was frequently decorated with embroidered or appliquéd figures of Imhotep or the god Thoth or an ibis on a lotus, the whole enclosed in a pottery container with a lid. This, too, was encouraging: the ibis, to be sure, was the special symbol of Thoth, but the ancient Egyptians were not purists about divine characteristics and often transferred them from one deity to another. Imhotep, after his deification as god of medicine, gradually acquired many of the attributes of Thoth including, significantly, the title "First Chief One of the Ibis."

Then, under an ancient tomb, Emery broke into a labyrinth of rock-hewn passages that were packed with such mummies. It turned out to be a veritable catacomb for ibises, one that had been built sometime after 500 B.C. beneath tombs dating two and a half millenniums earlier—and built with considerable difficulty, for time and again the workers had run into vertical shafts belonging to the tombs overhead and had had to erect retaining walls and false ceilings to get past them. Why should they go to such trouble unless the ground was particularly prized? All about, Emery kept coming upon more of the same kind of remains or others that pointed in the same direction: ibis mummies, late potsherds, even a batch of silver coins minted during the reign of Ptolemy I (366–283 B.C.)—from a purse dropped by some unlucky pilgrim, was his guess.

On December 1, 1965, Emery embarked on a second campaign. This time he decided to follow a new clue, the dumps of stone chips left by the masons who had hacked out the underground galleries. His first discovery was a modest-looking chapel that, fortunately, yielded some ostraca (fragments of pottery or limestone with writing on them; ostraca were the scratch-pads or note paper of an age in which the cheapest form of regular "paper"—papyrus—was prohibitively priced). These identified the building as an oracle of Thoth. Very good, but still not the tomb of Imhotep—so the excavators pressed on, following the trail of the ibis catacombs. In this spider web of rock-cut passages, each about twelve feet high and eight wide, they no longer found thousands, but hundreds of thousands of the mummified birds. The existence of the catacombs was not a surprise. Maps made during Napoleon's stay in Egypt include a site at Sakkara marked "*Tombeau de Momies d'Oiseaux*"; a visitor in 1716 claimed to have traversed two and a half miles of the galleries; and the indefatigable German scholar Richard Lepsius in 1843 had published a sketch plan of part of them. What was new was their extent—greater than anyone had ever thought—and the discovery that they had been deliberately cut un-

*Excavators estimate that nearly a million ibis mummies have been uncovered, proof of the widespread belief in Imhotep's divine powers. The wrapping at left is embroidered with an image of Imhotep. Another find in the same area is the sixth-century* B.C. *statue, right, of a scribe holding a shrine to the god Ptah.*

der the tombs of a far earlier age.

Emery's goal was to discover the main entrance, for he reckoned that here he would find a clue to the grave of Imhotep or at least to a recognizable part of his sanctuary. But the entrance continued to elude him, although he came upon one, and perhaps a second, side opening. Moreover, the search grew harder and harder. Where a gallery cut across a vertical shaft from an ancient tomb overhead, the masons of ancient Egypt had necessarily had to wall it off; in many cases the barriers put up had given way, and hundreds of tons of sand had spilled in, which the excavators were in no position to remove.

So, in his third campaign, carried out in the winter and spring of 1967, Emery stopped trying to follow the trail of the ibis mummies and, with an eye to certain other clues, began digging for the missing main entrance somewhat to the north. Although he did not find it, there were compensations. A temple of about the same period as the ibis catacombs was uncovered. For some inscrutable reason it had been destroyed, but its priests had cached the temple images and furniture nearby, and the excavators had the good fortune to hit upon the hiding place. At the same time indications kept mounting that they were near a spot sacred to the mother cows of the bulls of Apis. The next campaign, in the spring of last year, unearthed a temple to Isis, mother of the Apis. The trail was very warm—everything found so far could be related in one way or another to Imhotep—but definite trace of a sanctuary was still to be discovered.

In Egypt's well-filled pantheon Imhotep is one of the very, very few who can boast of promotion from mortal to immortal being. Egyptologists of the last century were skeptical about his human origins. At that time the only information available derived from accounts written two and a half millenniums after his presumed lifetime. There was, for example, the terse statement in a chronicle of the Pharaohs by Manetho, an Egyptian priest who lived in the third century B.C. and wrote in Greek. Under the entry for Zoser I, Manetho noted that "during his reign, lived Imouthes [i.e., Imhotep], who, because of his medical skill has the reputation of Asclepius [the Greek god of medicine] among the Egyptians and who was the inventor of the art of building with hewn stone. He also devoted attention to writing." Manetho certainly thought his "Imouthes" was a human, noted particularly as a doctor, architect, and author, but what was his authority for thinking so?

A more discursive reference to Imhotep smacked of the fanciful. It occurred in a lengthy inscription carved into one of the rocks on the islet of Siheil just below the First Cataract. Dating from about the second century B.C., it purports to be a copy of a document writen by Zoser in the eighteenth year of his reign. At that time the king was much worried by a famine. "I was in distress on the Great Throne . . . since the Nile had not overflowed [to water the fields] in my time for a space of seven years. Grain was scant, fruits were dried up, all things that people eat were short. Every man robbed his neighbor . . . infants wailed, the young waited idly, the old sorrowed in their hearts, crouched on the ground with legs bent and arms folded. The courtiers were in need, the temples were shut, the sanctuaries held nothing but air." At this moment of crisis Zoser turned to his

ELIOT ELISOFON

*Experimental architecture, be it ever so daring, often borrows from the past. Imhotep's inspiration for the three-quarter columns of this ruined temple at Sakkara came from bundles of reeds that were used as supports in mud-brick dwellings.*

learned vizier. "I asked the Chamberlain, the Ibis, the Chief Lector Priest Imhotep, Son of Ptah, 'What is the birthplace of the Nile?' " Since the world had to wait till the nineteenth century A.D. for the discovery of the source of the Nile, it is not surprising that Imhotep did not have the answer on the tip of his tongue; he requested time to consult the sacred books of Thoth, and the request was granted. "So he went, and he returned to me immediately to instruct me on the inundation of the Nile . . . and what the writings said. He unveiled for me the hidden spells thereof." This, plus a timely appearance in a dream of the god involved, led to the making of the appropriate sacrifices, and the Nile returned to normal.

Historians, with no better references to Imhotep as vizier of Zoser to go on than these, could hardly be blamed for their skepticism. In 1926, however, the question was settled once and for all. The excavations then going on at the Step Pyramid produced numerous fragments of a statue of Zoser. On its base were inscribed the names of Zoser and of "Imhotep, Chancellor of the King of Lower Egypt, Chief under the King." No question about it, there had been a man named Imhotep, and like many an Egyptian official, he had dedicated a statue to his Pharaoh.

Putting together whatever facts are now known and fleshing them out with some guesswork, we can sketch in a general way Imhotep's career. He was born at Memphis, the son of a man named Kanofer, who stood high in the Egyptian hierarchy, serving as Chief of Works. As was common in ancient Egypt, the son succeeded his father. In this office Imhotep's most important project, naturally, was the construction of a fittingly impressive grave monument for his master. Following the fashion of the day, he started to build him a mastaba. At some point Imhotep changed his mind, and what resulted was in effect six square mastabas, each smaller than the next, piled one upon the other like a child's building blocks—the Step Pyramid, first of the pyramid tombs and prototype of the mammoth trio at Giza.

Imhotep's creative touch can be seen not only in the form of the new monument but in its size and construction as well. Measuring 413 feet by 344 feet at the base and towering upward for 200 feet, the Step Pyramid dwarfed the mastabas surrounding it. And, while cut stone had before been used only for paving floors or lining chamber walls, the rest being of mud brick, Imhotep used it for the entire tomb complex: the pyramid, the courts and chapels, the decorative columns, above all the magnificent wall, more than a mile long, that enclosed the complex. It was the world's first important structure in stone: Manetho was perfectly right in calling its architect "the inventor of the art of building with hewn stone." Curiously, however, the stones are all small brick-shaped pieces, a far cry from the mighty ten-ton blocks used in the Great Pyramids. It seems Imhotep, for all his trail blazing, could not shake off the influence of Egypt's traditional building material.

Imhotep's other accomplishments as skilled administrator and sage counselor, written in more perishable substances than stone, can only be guessed at from his later reputation. As it happens, there are no contemporary references to him as a doctor, but this need not mean too much. One of his numerous offices was that of Chief Lector Priest, a post involving the reading of sacred books believed by the people to have magic powers; and Egyptian

ROGER WOOD

*Another of Imhotep's creations was this wall with half-columns (he never dared to use a free-standing column). These were inspired by papyrus flowers, which bloom atop a long three-sided stem, like the capitals on the columns' bases.*

medicine, for all its remarkable accomplishments, was never far removed from magic.

It was his reputation as a writer and administrator that started Imhotep on the road to godhood. By New Kingdom times, say roughly 1500 B.C., he had achieved the status of a sage: poets sang reverently of his wise words, and scribes, when they mixed water with lampblack to make ink, poured out the last drop as a libation in his honor. But it was not until much later, in the sixth century B.C., that Imhotep began his ascent to divine status. First he was advanced to the rank of a demigod. Likenesses of him at this stage show him as a priest or learned man: he has a clean-shaven head, sometimes covered with a skullcap, wears an apron and sandals, and sits pensively with an open scroll of papyrus on his lap. A multitude of bronze statuettes have been unearthed—the Louvre alone has fifty—many of which show him thus. They are probably votives offered by grateful worshipers.

Then, about the time that Egypt fell under the domination of the Greek Ptolemies, in the third century B.C., Imhotep was exalted to full-fledged membership in the pantheon: he became Egypt's god of medicine. His adherents forgot about his mortal father and endowed him with a divine one; to them he was son of Ptah, the god par excellence of his birthplace. The statuettes of the shaven-headed priest gave way to a new likeness showing a deity complete with beard and with a scepter in one hand and the symbol of life and happiness in the other. Places of worship were established from the marshes of the delta to the sands of Nubia. He had a temple to himself at Philae at the First Cataract and a shrine on one of the terraces of the great temple at Deir el Bahri. He shared quarters with other major gods at Karnak and Medinet Habu and Deir el Medîneh near Thebes, at Debod and Dakkeh and Kalabcheh in the Sudan.

From all accounts, however, the center for his worship was the celebrated sanctuary outside Memphis. We know it best under its Greek name, the Asclepieion, "Asclepius's place." For the Greeks, who were now settled throughout Egypt as the ruling class, had identified Imhotep with their own god of medicine, Asclepius, even as they had earlier identified Horus with Apollo, Thoth with Hermes, Ptah with Hephaestus. Here flocked the sick to be cured, the crippled to be made whole, the sterile to be rendered fertile. Egyptians, Greeks, the Romans who soon succeeded the Greeks as masters of Egypt—all came to implore his help, and kept coming for centuries. In fact, during the long period of Roman rule, he acquired greater and greater stature until, by at least the fourth century A.D., he had become the major god of Memphis. Then, having reached this pinnacle, he was toppled from it into oblivion by the wave of Christianity that triumphantly engulfed Egypt when Christianity was made the state religion of the Roman Empire.

Imhotep's sanctuary at Memphis was far more than just a place of worship. It was in part a sanatorium where his ailing adherents received treatment and in part a medical school run by his priests to provide fledgling members with their essential professional training. Of the several Egyptian medical textbooks that have been preserved, the most outstanding, the Edwin Smith Papyrus, was for a moment considered by James Breasted, dean of American Egyptologists, as possibly the work of Imhotep himself. But Breasted did not

ROGER WOOD—CAIRO MUSEUM

*A setting sun lights the unique profile of Imhotep's Step Pyramid, opposite. A fitting symbol of civilization's beginnings, it was the tomb of Zoser, portrayed individualistically (rather than symbolically) in limestone at left. The eyes are empty, for the inlays were removed sometime in antiquity. It is one of the world's earliest royal portraits.*

press his attractive notion since the papyrus was clearly a manual intended for army doctors who had to deal chiefly with wounds, whereas Imhotep would presumably have written for resident practitioners.

How did Imhotep heal? Certainly in part through the skill and experience of the priests who staffed his places of worship. But, like Asclepius of Greece, whose name he shared among his adherents of Greek extraction, he also enjoyed the potent aid of unquestioning faith on the part of his patients. Supremely confident in their god's ability, they went to his temple, composed themselves to pass the night there, and during sleep were mysteriously administered a cure. It seemed to come in a dream-induced vision—but let one of them tell about it himself, an anonymous Greek who, sometime in the second or first century B.C., went to the Asclepieion outside Memphis, was miraculously healed by the god, and gratefully wrote an account of it.

It was night, when every living creature was asleep except those in pain; the moment when the divinity used to manifest itself in its more active state. I was burning up with a violent fever and convulsed with loss of breath and coughing because of the pain in my side. My head was heavy from my suffering, and I was dropping off half-conscious into sleep. My mother, as a mother would for her child—and mine is affectionate by nature—was sitting without enjoying even a brief moment of sleep, distraught at my torment. Suddenly she spied—it was no dream or sleep, for her eyes, though not seeing clearly, were fixed wide open—a divine apparition. It came in, terrifying her and easily preventing her from seeing the God himself or his servants, whichever it was. All she could say was that there was someone of more than human height, clothed in shining garments and holding in his left hand a book; he merely eyed me two or three times from head to foot and then disappeared. When she had recovered herself she tried, still all atremble, to wake me. Finding me drenched with sweat but with my fever completely gone, she knelt down in worship to the divine manifestation. Then she wiped me off and made me somewhat more calm and collected. When I spoke with her, she wanted to tell me about the God's unique ability, but I, anticipating her, told her all myself. For everything she had witnessed with her own eyes had appeared to me in my dreams. After these pains in my side had ceased, and the God had given me one more healing treatment, I proclaimed his benefactions to all.

We will never know how an Egyptian priest arranged for superhuman stature and shining garments. Even more to be regretted, we will never know how he broke fevers or cured pains in the side. At the Asclepieion nothing was ever committed to writing—at least to writing that might fall into the hands of the uninitiated; the priests of Imhotep-Asclepius were as closemouthed as members of any trade about their secrets.

But we do have a chance of knowing what the setting was like in which all this was carried on. Emery may at any moment come upon it. And there should be something special about even the bare ruins of a sanctum so awesomely impressive that all who entered were convinced they were in the presence of divinity.

He might even have the good luck to find its *raison d'être*—the mastaba of Imhotep.

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## IN THE LIGHT OF THE PAST

By J. H. PLUMB

# THE ASTROLOGERS

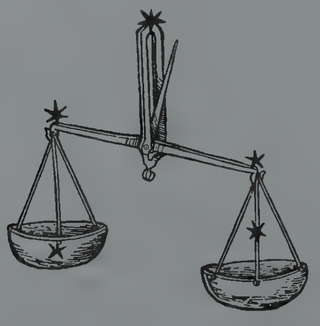
Are you Taurus or Gemini, Pisces or Capricorn? Does your eye glance furtively at the column headed "The Stars and You," and are you relieved when you read that you could have a "speculative benefit" or worried when you see "changeability in relationships may pose problems"? Or does a slightly sheepish, shamefaced smile flutter across your face as you turn hurriedly to another page of your newspaper? I suspect it strikes few readers that the silly astrological columns are the sad end of an extraordinary human enterprise. The belief that the movements of the stars are related to man's destiny dates back to the very earliest days of the neolithic revolution if not before. And the fact that popular, nonelite newspapers in America, England, France, Germany, Italy, India—indeed in all non-Communist countries—find it worthwhile to publish astrological columns day in and day out, indicates the persistence of that belief.

In addition to the popular astrologers, high priests of the cult still exist. They are masters of intricate calculations who cast horoscopes and predict the fate of individuals with the conviction of scientists, men and women who believe as intensely in the stars as did the astrologer-magicians of ancient China. True, over the last three centuries belief in the stars has steadily weakened, and the market for horoscopes dwindles. With the coming of industrial society and the scientific revolution, which has given us an accurate knowledge of the stars, astrology has become the plaything of the credulous and the ill-educated. But two hundred years ago its power in the West was still strong: both Cagliostro and Casanova cast horoscopes and interpreted the stars in order to bamboozle aristocrats, merchants, and attractive women. And a century before that the stars were playing a truly vital part in human affairs—although historians rarely pay any attention to this aspect of seventeenth-century belief.

The Earl of Shaftesbury, the violent Whig who nearly toppled Charles II from his throne by exploiting the hysteria of the Popish Plot in 1678–79, believed absolutely in astrology. (John Locke, the rationalist philosopher, lived in his household but apparently had no impact on this belief of Shaftesbury's.) A Dutch doctor who dabbled in the occult had cast the earl's horoscope and so, Shaftesbury thought, foretold all that would happen to him. Nor was Shaftesbury an isolated crank. The great Habsburg general Wallenstein, a leader in the Thirty Years' War, took no action, military or political, without consulting the stars, and no one thought him either eccentric or pagan.

In the centuries before the Enlightenment astrology lived quite comfortably with Christianity. Many kings kept astrologers at court and consulted them regularly. Dr. John Dee, the Elizabethan mathematician and astrologer, consulted the spirits in a polished obsidian mirror that he had somehow or other acquired from Aztec Mexico via Spain; and he, too, used the stars to predict the future. He created a sense of fear with his activities, but the most prominent Elizabethans consulted him, and he died comfortably enough in his bed and not at the stake. He might practice magic, but even in that age, terrified as it was by witchcraft, he survived. The stars were beyond the Devil and his work. They belonged to the mechanism of the universe, a piece of God's handiwork—therefore good and open to interpretation. A belief in astrology permeated all heresies and all creeds: Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Moslem. And in this respect, at least, they were at one with Hindus and Chinese and with the civilizations of the Middle East. The stars influenced the lives of Sumerians, Akkadians, Babylonians, and Egyptians.

The first great historian of China, Ssŭ-ma Chi'en, gloried in the title The Grand Astrologer, possibly because the

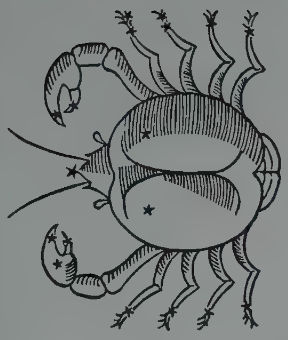


Libra

Scorpio

Sagittarius

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM *Poeticon Astronomicon* BY HYGINUS, VENICE, 1482—WALTERS ART GALLERY



CANCER

LEO

VIRGO

earliest archives to be kept systematically were those that dealt with astronomical data. Indeed the Chinese not only consulted the stars but devised the most elaborate instruments to determine their precise conjunction at any given moment. One of the most elaborate and complex astronomical clocks of antiquity was built by the Chinese so that the position of the stars would be known, even if the heavens were cloudy, in case the empress should conceive when the emperor paid a visit to her bed. Heaven would naturally be disclosing its hand at such an auspicious moment, either to foretell happiness or doom.

But long before the Chinese had developed their elaborate system of stargazing, the Assyrians and Egyptians had been studying the heavens just as intensely. Of all civilizations the Assyrian was perhaps the most addicted to astrology, and no king of Babylon would act in minor, let alone major, matters without consulting the stars. A great reference library was built up in the kings' palaces, so that the predictions and their results could be studied and referred to. By the time Babylon fell the Assyrian astrologers and divinators had reference material dating back nearly a thousand years. The ancient Egyptians studied the stars, too, and believed in their benign or malevolent influence. Nor was belief in astrology derived from a single center. For without any contact with Europe, the Mayas in the Yucatán and Guatemala built huge observatories and watched the stars. From China to Peru, throughout many millenniums, men's lives were star-haunted, and the heavens wrote in cryptic symbols the fate of nations and the destiny of men.

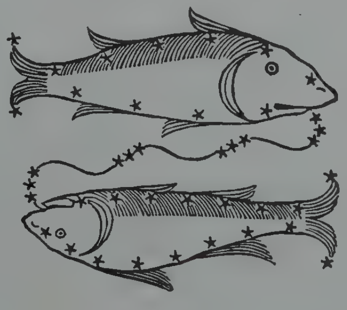
So those foolish columns in the newspapers have a long, long history—a history heaving with portent. The stars have frightened men, made them jubilant, and, above all, strengthened a sense of unalterable fate not only in the hearts of the peasant and craftsman but also in emperors and kings, priests and soldiers. It is easy, of course, to see how relevant initially the position of the stars was to all communities that depended on the soil. Changes in the constellations indicated the coming of spring or winter or foretold rains in the Yucatán or the Nile flood in Egypt, events that, if delayed or inadequate, could mean famine. To the peasant the sky and the seasons were in mysterious harmony, although they were capable of discord. The constellations might appear, and yet the rains might stay away, in spite of sacrifice and religious observance; and then for years the harmony might be re-established. The will of the gods and the stars were interconnected, but not in an obvious way; they needed to be studied with minute care; only then could they be used safely for prediction.

But humanity's need for the stars goes deeper than the need to discern the changing seasons or the coming of rain and water, deeper than the need to foretell the fate of kings. There is a need in man to know and to rationalize his universe through magic and through very precise and detailed knowledge. He derives a sense of security from knowledge, whether it be the very precise and detailed knowledge of territory—of the trees and flowers and animals—such as the most primitive tribes of men acquire, or of the complexities of modern physics and biology. His aim has always been both to control his environment and to banish anxiety. Man has always been, as it were, scientifically oriented, even if his earlier and more primitive sciences did not work very well.

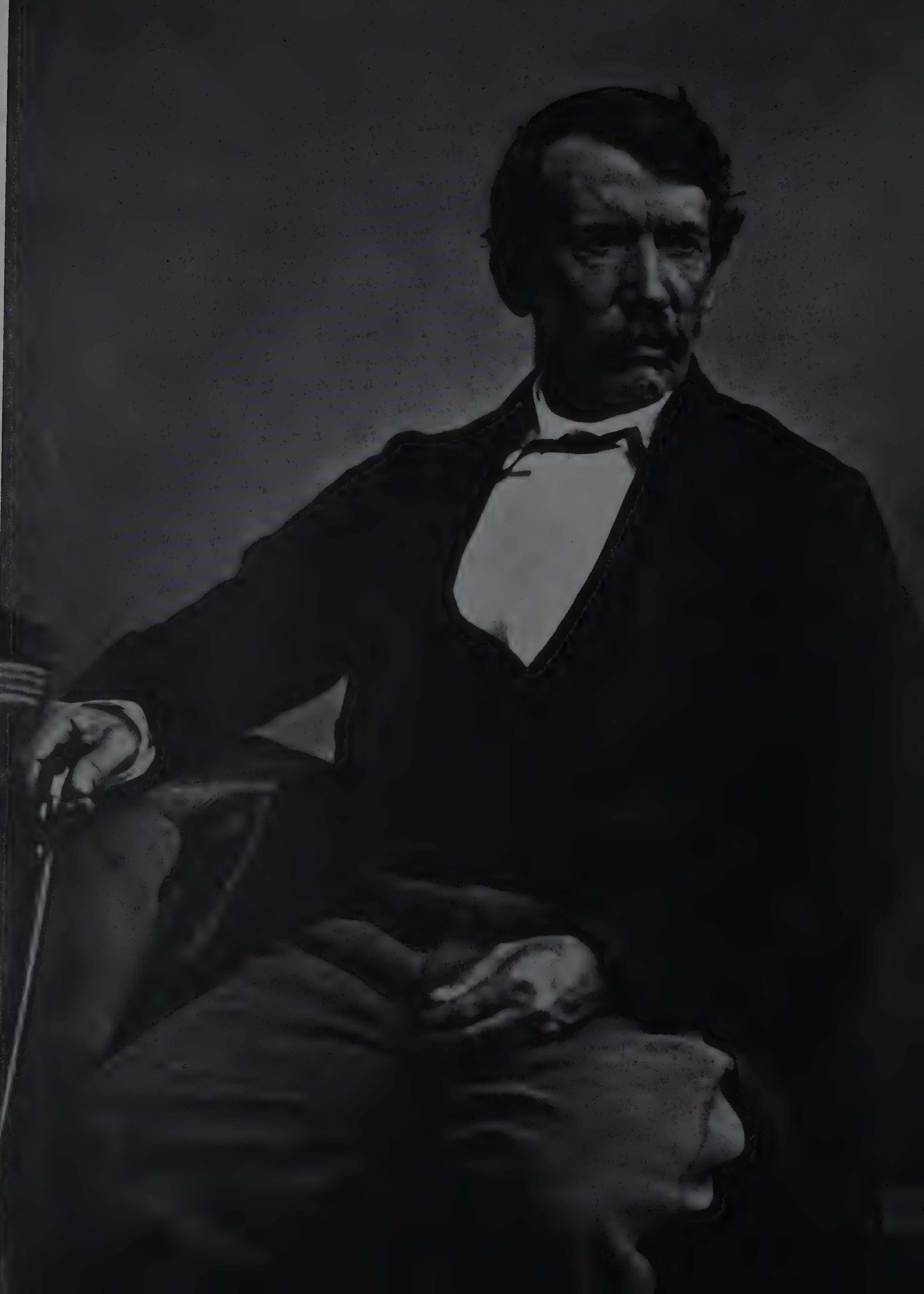
Only gradually did he learn the way to investigate precisely and to control (perhaps one should say exploit) his environment; but he put the same intellectual effort, the same passion to observe and to accumulate knowledge, into his earlier attempts. Magicians and astrologers were but mankind's first scientists. They were men of great intelligence and keen observation, no different in quality from Newton or Rutherford, and essentially dedicated to the same task. Many of their facts were right and beautifully observed; their pursuits led them to invent instruments of great ingenuity. What was wrong was their set of premises. And in the vaporings of a popular newspaper astrologer one sees the pathetic end of a once majestic and comprehensive study of destiny: a science that for thousands of years interpreted men's hopes and fears and that seemed to give them a chance of evading disaster and controlling their fate.

CAPRICORN

AQUARIUS



PISCES



GERNSHEIM COLL., HUMANITIES RESEARCH CENTER, UNIV. OF TEXAS AT AUSTI

# Dr. Livingstone Presumes

He revealed darkest Africa to the world, but at what frightful cost

Scarcely more than a hundred years ago less was known about the interior of Africa than was known about China in Marco Polo's time or about the surface of Mars today. Africa was called the "Dark Continent" with good reason. Remote parts of Asia and the Americas had been explored, but south of the Sahara was land unseen by civilized man. European and Asian civilizations had lapped at the edges of the African continent for centuries, but millions of square miles of central Africa, with its great mountains, rivers, jungles, and deserts, its minerals, peoples, and potential, were completely unknown. Spain and Portugal in their empire-building days had found it easier to cross the Atlantic than to explore the vast continent at their feet.

The man who opened this continent to the eyes of a marveling world was a Scottish missionary, David Livingstone. In the course of his life he saw more of the African interior than any man had ever seen before, and he told the world of the wonders, the savagery, and the unique geography of this fabulous land. The Victorians were right to marvel at his accomplishments, to wonder why any man would willingly endure what he suffered, and they were right to honor him for the hero he was. Yet heroes can be peculiar.

A missionary, he disliked the drudgery of ordinary missionary work; a misanthrope, he was capable of inspiring a loyalty that bordered on devotion; a crusader against slavery, he often lived among slavers, sometimes unwittingly helping them and often quite wittingly allowing himself to be helped by them; crusty and irascible, he had a reputation for humility; a doctor, his knowledge of medicine was scanty. He insisted on having his way—even at other people's expense—and he was praised for his self-sacrifice. He willingly paid a terrible price for the opportunity to accomplish his great deeds—and so did all those closest to him. A deeply religious man obsessed with questions of morality, he was responsible for the death of his wife, and he virtually deserted his children.

*Back in England on a visit in 1864, David Livingstone glowered for a photographer, visited his family, and raised funds to return to Africa, where he clearly felt more at home.*

David Livingstone was born in 1813 in Blantyre, Scotland, the second son of a tailor's daughter and a clerk in a cotton mill who later became an itinerant tea peddler. At the age of ten young Livingstone went to work in a cotton factory, but so keen was his desire for an education that with his first earnings he purchased a copy of Ruddiman's *Rudiments of Latin*; he took night classes and studied in snatches from books propped up on his spinning jenny. By saving and borrowing, he was eventually able to attend classes in medicine and Greek at Glasgow.

He was twenty before he became absorbed in that great passion of the Scots: militant, Calvinistic religion. His own "inner spiritual life" began when he read a book by Thomas Dick that, for him, reconciled science and religion. Soon after, he decided to become a medical missionary in China.

It was easier to become a doctor in those days, and for a bright young man like Livingstone it was not too difficult to pass the two-year course of study required to become a licentiate of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons. The next step was to get to China, and he applied to the London Missionary Society. To the director of the society Livingstone did not appear promising: awkward, uncultured, and provincial, he could neither preach nor write very well. However, his piety, intelligence, and energy impressed the directors, and he was accepted.

When his dream of going to China was thwarted by the outbreak of the Opium War, Livingstone turned to Africa, an equally fertile area for finding heathen to heal and convert. Late in 1840 the London Missionary Society sent him to South Africa to work with Robert Moffat, who had already made a name for himself by establishing a mission station in Kuruman, 120 miles northwest of Kimberly in what was then the Bechuana territory.

At Cape Town Livingstone immediately became embroiled in the feuds of the other missionaries. He was very quick to condemn those who lived in comparative luxury near civilization, and he spoke out against the ill-treatment of the Africans. These sentiments were much resented, coming as they did from a young man who had just arrived. It was perhaps fortunate that he spent only a month at the Cape before continuing on to Kuruman, where he was instructed to wait for Moffat, then in England. Moffat was delayed, however, and Livingstone began to explore the surrounding country and to

*By* BYRON FARWELL

become acquainted with the various tribes, some of whom had, he reported, "reached the extreme of degradation . . . their mind is darkness itself."

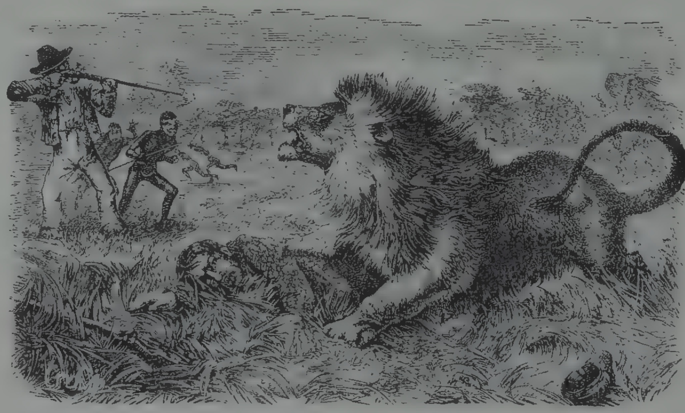
Livingstone soon discovered that making individual conversions was tedious, difficult, and in the short term unproductive. What was most needed, he maintained, was the opening up of all Africa to Western civilization. Like most Victorians, he equated civilization with Christianity and thought trade the most civilizing of agencies. If pioneers would lead the way, traders would follow, and with trade would come civilization and Christianity for the masses.

For two years Livingstone worked in and around Kuruman before he was given permission to establish a more remote station to the northwest. There he found friendly African chiefs who welcomed him, hoping not for the saving of their souls but for the white man's medicine. A chief once said to him, "I wish you would change my heart. Give me medicine to change it, for it is proud, proud and angry, angry always." Had such a drug really existed, Livingstone could well have made use of some of it himself.

As a site for his new mission station Livingstone selected a beautiful valley that, unfortunately, was infested with lions. He organized a hunt. The party had no success until Livingstone spotted a lion sitting on a rock about thirty yards away. He fired and was reloading his gun when he heard a shout—and looked up to see the wounded beast springing at him. The lion caught his shoulder and brought him to the ground, then shook him "as a terrier dog does a rat." An African companion tried to shoot but his flintlock misfired; the lion turned and bit him in the thigh. Another African tried to spear him and was in turn injured before the lion at last fell dead.

With this incident the romantic legend of Livingstone began. To those at home there could be no more vivid illustration of the dangers he faced in bringing Christianity to the African heathen. Livingstone's injury was real enough: his collarbone was broken in several places, and the wound was slow to heal. He did not see himself as a hero, but looked upon his wound as a "trial of patience" and worried that he had "not learned all that was intended by the chastisement."

It was while recovering at Kuruman that he courted Robert Moffat's eldest daughter, Mary. They were married in 1844. From this distance in time she appears as little more than a gray figure in the background of her husband's colorful exploits. Livingstone loved Mary and, in an abstract way, their children, three of whom were born in the first four years of their marriage; but his love of exploration was growing into a stronger passion.



*Mauled by a lion on his first journey, Livingstone became a legend. Capitalizing on it, he printed this picture in 1857 in his* Travels.

At first he tried to have both his family and his exploring life. He set off with his wife for the station in the lion valley. There he worked with an older and more senior missionary named Roger Edwards. Livingstone had a dominating (some thought domineering) personality, and he soon quarreled violently with Edwards; he never again worked with another missionary. In 1846 he moved on to found another mission station some forty miles away, but drought soon forced him to take his family and build yet another station, on the Kolobeng River. The years he now spent at Kolobeng were his last attempt to lead a settled life.

In June, 1849, in company with two English sportsmen, one of whom, William Oswell, provided the expedition with most of its supplies, Livingstone set off across the Kalahari Desert. Two months later he discovered Lake Ngami, a feat that earned him twenty-five guineas, the public thanks of the Royal Geographical Society, and a considerable amount of fame. On the list of Africa's natural wonders this minor lake—which today is just a marshland—would appear near the bottom, but the discovery touched the imagination of his countrymen and widened a fast-growing interest in Africa.

On returning from his first real expedition Livingstone decided, against the advice of the Moffats, to take his family and some of the Kolobeng natives to the Lake Ngami area. The new expedition was not a success. The children and all of the bearers came down with fever, and the cattle, attacked by the tsetse fly, died. Reluctantly, Livingstone had to turn back to Kolobeng, where, shortly after, Mary Livingstone gave birth to their fourth child, a girl who lived only six weeks. She herself fell ill, and the right side of her face became paralyzed. The Livingstones retreated to Kuruman to lick their wounds and recover.

In spite of this near disaster, Livingstone was determined to make another expedition north with Mary and the children. Robert Moffat and his wife strenuously objected, but Livingstone let it be known that he considered those who undertook to think for him as well as for themselves "a little soft-headed." Although Mary was again pregnant, Livingstone set off with his family and William Oswell, his hunting friend and backer.

The Bushman guide lost his way, they nearly died of thirst, and they suffered from hundreds of insect bites. Finally Oswell was able to persuade

Livingstone to return to Kolobeng. On the way back Mary Livingstone gave birth to her fifth child. Even Livingstone now saw that it was cruel to drag his wife and babies through unexplored parts of the African interior; he must either give up exploration or his family. He chose to give up the latter. ". . . so powerfully convinced am I that it is the will of our Lord I should, *I will go, no matter who opposes.*"

His family stood in his way; they had to go. He took Mary and their four children (the eldest was only six) to Cape Town and put them on a ship for England. He promised to send for them in two years, though it was four and a half years before he saw any of them again. The directors of the London Missionary Society were asked to see to their financial needs while they were living with his poor parents in Scotland; he had already spent his meager stipend of £100 a year. He justified what he called "orphanizing my children" by maintaining that he was obeying the command: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

Livingstone hurried back to his explorations and his heathen, "those sad captives of sin and Satan." On reaching Kolobeng he found that Boer raiders had attacked the place, destroying his house, cattle, books, and medicines, and carrying away his furniture and clothing. Livingstone was angry, but as he wrote later, "the plundering only set me entirely free for my expedition to the north, and I have never since had a moment's concern for anything I left behind."

In January, 1853, he set off with a few African followers to explore the Barotse country and then to continue on to São Paulo de Loanda, the capital of Portuguese Angola on the Atlantic coast, a march of 1500 miles. He lived on such game as he could shoot and on what provisions he was able to purchase from the natives with his small supply of trade goods. Without enough medicine to treat himself he was plagued by malaria and by other tropical maladies unknown and unrecognized in his time. The land through which he traveled was almost trackless, and inhabited by primitive and uncivilized tribes. But this was the life he loved.

Along the way Livingstone preached whenever he had a chance and often spoke before large crowds that had never seen a white man before. He was enough of a realist to know how ineffective these efforts were. He was never a good preacher, and it is doubtful whether his command of the various African languages was always adequate, but he believed, perhaps rightly, that he could teach by setting a good example. One of the ways he chose to show the advantages of a Christian life was by setting high standards for his own cleanliness, and, a fact that later impressed Stanley, he shaved every day.

Livingstone never in any way ever went native. He despised many of the ways of the African and was disgusted by what seemed to him their moral depravity. At the same time he liked them, he tried to defend them from other white men, and he enjoyed an astonishing success in his dealings with them. He was often resentful of his superiors; he frequently quarreled with his equals; but with Africans, who seemed to him so obviously inferior, he showed the best side of his character. To have crossed Africa in those times, moving among suspicious and warlike tribes without ever firing a shot at a native and without ever suffering deliberate physical harm from one, was perhaps his greatest personal triumph.

By the time he reached Angola Livingstone was sick with fever and so weak that he could neither walk nor stay on the back of his riding ox. His supplies were exhausted and his clothes were in rags. However, once across the Kwango River he was succored by Portuguese officials and soldiers, and he limped into Luanda on May 31, 1854.

It was not until September 20 that he was prepared to march again. A British warship that came into the harbor offered him passage to England, but he refused, saying that he must take his twenty-seven African followers back to their homes. Thanks to the generosity of the British sailors and the Portuguese community, Livingstone started back well equipped. He found the tribes less extortionate on his return, and this he credited to the fact that his party was better armed. His men had had only five muskets on the trip to Luanda; now every man had a gun. He did not want to fight, but he was prepared to do so if necessary. Once his party was set upon in a jungle; Livingstone, sick with fever, staggered down the path with a revolver in his hand and murder in his eye until he came upon the chief of the attacking tribe. The chief at once protested that he only wanted peace and called off his tribesmen.

Livingstone did not hesitate to use force on his own men, either: once, when one of his bearers refused to obey an order, he hit the man over the head with his revolver. "Subordination must be maintained at all risks," he explained.

There were, naturally, the usual dangers and difficulties of African travel: an attack by an army of red ants, a narrow escape from a charging buffalo, a canoe rammed by a hippopotamus, accidents on the march, and, of course, much sickness. Livingstone at one point noted in his journal that he had just recovered from his twenty-seventh bout of fever (probably malaria), and once he was forced to stay in a village for twenty-two days to recover from "rheumatic" fever. Finally Livingstone reached the friendly tribes among whom he had lived and worked. But instead of turning south to Kuruman, the Cape, and then England, he began another expedition, this time to the east coast.

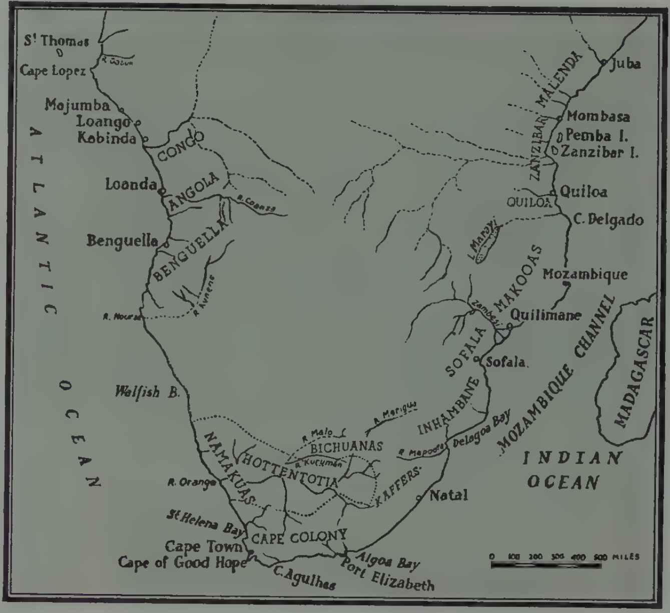
Almost at once Livingstone made an important geographical discovery. He had heard of a waterfall on the Zambezi River and set off to look for it. What he found was one of the magnificent natural wonders of the world: a waterfall 420 feet high (twice the height of Niagara Falls) and more than a mile wide. He named it Victoria Falls, after his queen. Most of the remainder of the trip to the east coast was made by floating down the Zambezi, and it was neither as hazardous nor as difficult as his journey to the west coast. When on May 20, 1856, he reached the port of Quelimane in Mozambique, he had crossed the width of south-central Africa, the first European to do so.

The P & O Steam Company gave Livingstone free passage to England via Marseilles. He reached London on December 9, 1856. There he was received by Prince Albert and later by Queen Victoria; he was made a Fellow of the Royal Society; he was given the freedom of the cities of London, Glasgow, and Edinburgh; Oxford and Cambridge gave him honorary degrees; and a special meeting of the Royal Geographical Society honored him. He found himself a popular hero, his picture in magazines and himself the object of admiring crowds on the streets.

The London Missionary Society was proud of him too, of course, but he was angry with the LMS. He had received at Quelimane a letter from the secretary of the society that, while friendly, pointed out that his explorations were "connected only remotely with the spread of the Gospel" and that the society's funds were limited. The letter struck a sensitive chord. It was important to Livingstone that he retain the illusion that his explorations were indeed in the service of the Lord. He broke his connection with the society and sought new ways of financing further expeditions; he would be a missionary only in his own way. He applied to a sympathetic government and was given command of an expedition to travel up the Zambezi River. He was also appointed consul for the east coast of Africa south of Zanzibar. Livingstone was proud to be a consul, and for the rest of his life he habitually wore the peaked cloth consul's cap of blue trimmed with a gold band.

Before leaving England, Livingstone wrote his first book, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa.* He had never learned to spell, and his grammar left much to be desired, but his publisher corrected his mistakes; the book was a tremendous success. Livingstone made a considerable amount of money, though he spent most of it on his next expedition. Very little went to relieve the poverty of his family in Scotland.

MAPS FROM *Lion of Africa* BY PATRICK PRINGLE, 1953



*Africa before Livingstone explored it was indeed a dark continent; its only known landmarks were those shown here, on a map of 1840.*

On March 10, 1858 Livingstone, sailed for Africa with a well-equipped expedition. Among those accompanying him were Dr. John Kirk, a botanist and physician, Livingstone's younger brother Charles, Mary Livingstone, and their youngest child, Oswell. After a stopover in Cape Town, where Mary Livingstone disembarked to have another baby, the expedition moved on, reaching the mouth of the Zambezi on May 15. Here they put together a small knocked-down steamer that they had brought with them, and here Commander Bedingfield, the expedition's naval officer, resigned after a heated argument with Livingstone. This was the first of a long series of squabbles; it was, as Dr. Kirk later put it, "an unfortunate expedition for quarrels." Livingstone's bitterest arguments were with his brother, who finally fell sick and left.

Resignations were not the only sorrows of the expedition. The portable steamer, named the *Ma-Robert* (the African name for Mary Livingstone, meaning "mother of Robert," her eldest son), was badly made and unsuited for the work required of it. Then it was discovered that passage up the Zambezi was blocked by rapids; attempts to explore the Shire and Ruvuma rivers were also thwarted by cataracts; supplies and mail were lost when the boat bringing them ashore capsized; a bishop sent out to establish a mission station on the Zambezi died of fever; and Livingstone got into trouble with the Portuguese authorities by freeing slaves. He sent for his wife, and Mary Livingstone rejoined him in January, 1862; she died of fever three months later. Finally, in 1863, the government ordered the expedition withdrawn. The only geographical finding of any importance had been the discovery by Livingstone and Kirk of Lake Nyasa, the third largest lake in Africa.

The shortcomings of the *Ma-Robert* had led Livingstone to order a new boat, which he paid for himself out of his book royalties. When the expedition was recalled, he was at first uncertain as to what he should do with his only possession. He was afraid that if he sold it in Mozambique it would be used in the slave trade, so he decided to sail it to India and sell it there. With a crew of three Europeans (a carpenter, a stoker, and a sailor) and seven Africans who had never before been to sea he navigated the forty-foot craft some 2,500 miles across the Indian Ocean to Bombay, arriving there after a voyage of forty-five days. It was a remarkable feat for a man whose only previous experience with the sea had been as a ship's passenger. The British community in Bombay gave him a warm welcome, but he took the next ship sailing for England.

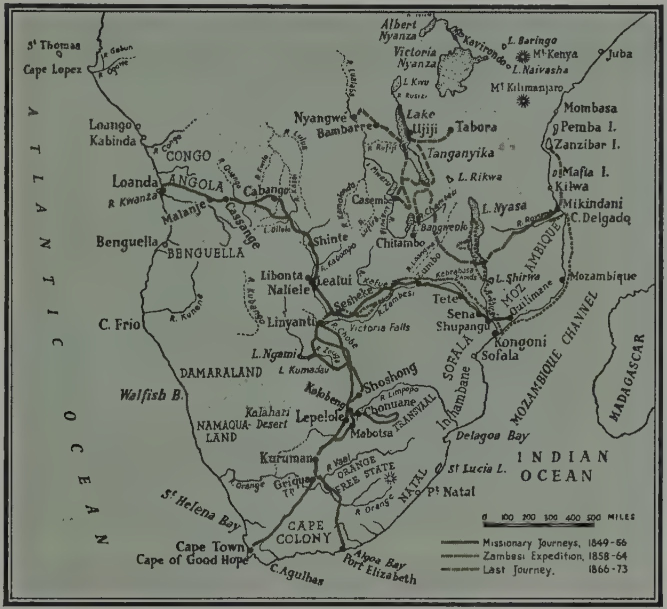
His reception at home was not as enthusiastic as it had been last time. However, Livingstone now began a crusade against the slave trade, and he easily found indignant ears for his stories of the evils and horrors of slave raiding and of the cruelties of the slavers. Livingstone had tried to open up Africa to trade, but the first businessmen to arrive, often using his maps, were the slavers.

While in Britain he took time off to pay a brief visit to his aged mother and his children. He did not recognize his eldest son or, of course, his youngest child, "a nice little girl" now five years old whom he had never seen. Then he went away. He never saw any of them again.

His next expedition had nothing to do with missionary work or the slave trade but with pure geographical discovery. The Royal Geographical Society gave him the most romantic assignment of the century: find the sources of the Nile* and the watershed of the continent of Africa. His conscience, however, would not permit him to give up the idea that he was still a missionary, and he wrote a friend, "I would not consent to go simply as a geographer, but as a missionary, and do geography by the way, because I feel I am in the way of duty when trying either to enlighten these poor people, or open their land to lawful commerce." The Royal Geographical Society allowed him to keep his illusions.

He left Zanzibar for the Ruvuma River on March 19, 1866, with thirty-six men: nine emancipated slaves from the Nassick Mission near Bombay, thirteen sepoys loaned by the Indian government, ten Johanna men, and four men from South Africa. Three of the Africans had been with him on previous expeditions. He also took with him six camels, four Indian buffaloes, four donkeys, and two mules. Nearly a week later the party landed on the African mainland; Livingstone engaged twenty-four local bearers and disappeared into the interior. He was now fifty-three years old, and until his death seven years later he would see only one other European.

By this time Livingstone was no longer the only African explorer. Important geographical discoveries had been made by others while he was on the Zambezi: Richard Burton and John Speke had found Lake Tanganyika, Speke had discovered Lake Victoria, and Samuel Baker and his wife became the first Europeans to reach Lake Albert. Livingstone's plan was to enter Africa farther south than any of these explorers and then to move northeast toward the area he believed to be the watershed of the Nile.


St Thomas
Cape Lopez
Gabun
Albert Nyanza
Victoria Nyanza
L. Baringo
Mt Kenya
L. Naivasha
Juba
L. Kivu
Mt Kilimanjaro
Mombasa
Pemba I.
Zanzibar I.
Mafia I.
Kilwa
Mikindani
C. Delgado
Nyangwe
Bambarre
Lake Ujiji
Tabora
Tanganyika
L. Rikwa
L. Nyasa
Loango
Kabinda
CONGO
Loanda
ANGOLA
R. Kwanza
Malanje
Cassange
Cabango
Casembe
L. Bangweolo
Chitambo
Shinte
Benguella
BENGUELLA
Libonta
Naliele
Lealui
Sesheke
Zambesi
L. Shirwa
Mozambique
MOZAMBIQUE
Quilimane
Tete
Sena
Shupanga
Kongoni
Sofala
SOFALA
MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL
MADAGASCAR
C. Frio
Linyanti
Victoria Falls
L. Ngami
DAMARALAND
Walfish B.
Shoshong
Kolobeng
Chonuane
Lepelole
Mabotsa
Kalahari Desert
NAMAQUA-LAND
TRANSVAAL
Inhambane
Delagoa Bay
Kuruman
ORANGE FREE STATE
Griqua Tn
Orange
NATAL
St Lucia L.
Pt Natal
INDIAN OCEAN
ATLANTIC OCEAN
St Helena Bay
CAPE COLONY
Cape Town
Cape of Good Hope
C. Agulhas
Algoa Bay
Port Elizabeth
0 100 200 300 400 500 MILES
Missionary Journeys, 1849-56
Zambesi Expedition, 1858-64
Last Journey. 1866-73

*After Livingstone's three journeys (the routes are traced here in colored lines) Africa became a land whose features were familiar.*

"The source of the Nile." This was the magic phrase, clothed in mystery and romance. For more than 6,000 years men had lived on the banks of the Nile; yet, until a century ago, no one knew where this great river, flowing north out of the heart of Africa, began. The Romans—and even they were perhaps not the first—had sent an expedition to find the source, but after marching for a thousand miles along its desert banks, they gave up the attempt. In the middle of the last century it was known that the Blue Nile flowed into the main stream out of Abyssinia and that the White Nile flowed out of an impenetrable mass of vegetation called the sudd, but no one knew exactly what lay beyond the sudd. Livingstone hoped to find out by approaching the watershed from the south. Unknown to him, the Nile has many sources, and the main one, Lake Victoria, had already been discovered, though its relationship to the river had not yet been proved.

In the first few weeks after landing in Africa Livingstone was occupied with sorting out the expedition's personnel. The "Nassick boys" had "the slave-spirit pretty strongly," which meant they were lazy and insubordinate; the sepoys were "an utter nuisance"; the Johanna men were liars, thieves, and shirkers. He paid off the sepoys and sent them back. The Johanna men deserted and reported such a horrifying tale of Livingstone's death that the Royal Geographical Society sent out an expedition to learn the truth—the first of several that were to be sent out to inquire after him or to find him. None of the Royal Geographical Society's expeditions ever reached the doctor, although, on the first one, just enough was learned to know that he was still alive and, on the last one, that he was dead.

Livingstone was left with only a few Nassick boys; three faithful servants, Chuma, Susi, and Amoda; and such bearers as he was able to pick up along the way. The country through which he passed was not jungle but savanna, tall grass broken by clumps of forest. Arab slavers had been here before him, and he found evidence of their depredations everywhere. Although food was scarce and progress was slowed by rain, he had no trouble with either the natives or the slavers. All progressed relatively smoothly until, on January 20, 1867, one of his bearers ran off with his medicine chest. Undoubtedly some of the medicines were worthless or worse, but some, such as quinine, were absolutely essential. "I felt as if I had now received the sentence of death," he wrote in his journal. Certainly he was condemned to suffer from malaria and dysentery. He tried to find the will of God in this misfortune, yet "this loss of the medicine-box gnaws at the heart terribly."

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*See "The Nile" by Lord Kinross, Summer, 1966

By April of 1867, when he had reached the southern end of Lake Tanganyika, he was so weakened from continual attacks of fever and from lack of adequate food that he was "a mere ruckle of bones" and could no longer go on. The faithful Susi and Chuma cared for him, but it was several weeks before he was able to march again. As soon as he was well, however, Livingstone set out to look for a lake he had heard of to the southwest. On November 8 they arrived at Lake Mweru on the present Zambia-Congo border. All but four of his men deserted him, but he continued on anyway, and on July 18, 1868, he discovered Lake Bangweulu (3,800 square miles) in what is today Zambia. He then made his way to Ujiji, a trading center of some importance on the eastern shores of Lake Tanganyika, where he had asked that supplies be sent to him by way of the slave caravan route from Zanzibar. Although Livingstone genuinely had the greatest hatred for the slave trade, he gladly accepted the help of these Arab slavers.

When, sick, tired, and ragged, he reached Ujiji on March 14, 1869, he found to his bitter disappointment that the supplies sent to him from Zanzibar had been looted: the clothing, food, and medicines he so badly needed were gone, and only some tea, coffee, sugar, and pieces of cloth were left. There was not even a letter or an old newspaper for him.

Livingstone wrote bitterly: "This is a den of the worst kind of slave traders . . . the Ujiji slavers are the vilest of the vile. It is not a trade, but a system of consecutive murders; they go to plunder and kidnap, and every trading trip is nothing but a foray." He was at this time living in a house lent to him by an Arab slaver.

Livingstone set out by canoe to cross Lake Tanganyika and explore the Manyuema country beyond. He expected to be gone four or five months, but it was two years before he returned to Ujiji. Constantly ill from chronic dysentery, suffering from tropical ulcers on his feet that would not heal, slogging through adhesive mud and swampland in torrential rains, deserted by all but three of his followers, insulted and threatened by hostile natives ("the most bloody, callous savages I know"), Livingstone still kept on. In the process he explored much of the great watershed of the Congo, hoping that it was the watershed of the Nile.

At last his ulcerated feet brought him to a stop. He simply could not walk: "If the foot were put to the ground a discharge of bloody ichor flowed, and the same discharge happened every night with considerable pain, that prevented sleep; the wailing of the slaves tortured with these sores is one of the night sounds of a slave-camp; they eat through everything—muscle, tendon, and bone, and often lame permanently if they do not kill the poor things . . . The vicinity was hot, and the pain increased with the size of the wound."

For eight months he was immobilized in the center of the continent: "I groan and am in bitterness at the delay, but thus it is." He read the Bible through four times, he wrote up his journal, and he dreamed of finding the source of the Nile and even of finding some evidence that Moses had been in Central Africa. He had heard of a broad river called the Lualaba that flowed north, and though he was haunted by the fear that it was the Congo (it is), he convinced himself that it must be the Nile, and he was determined to find it and explore it.

At long last he recovered and set off to find the Lualaba. He succeeded but was unable to purchase a canoe to explore it. At last, hearing that supplies for him had reached Ujiji, he made his way back there. It was a harrowing trip: "ill and almost every step in pain," he was twice the target of spears thrown by the natives.

He reached Ujiji on October 23, 1871, a physical wreck and a pauper. "I was now reduced to a skeleton," he wrote, but he was sustained by the thought of the medicines, food, and other supplies waiting for him. The supplies had arrived, but they had all been stolen by Arab slavers. He was now completely destitute. Worse, there was no hope left that any help would reach him. "My spirits were at their lowest ebb," he wrote. Then, on November 3, 1871, his servant Susi rushed up to him and cried, "An Englishman! I see him!"

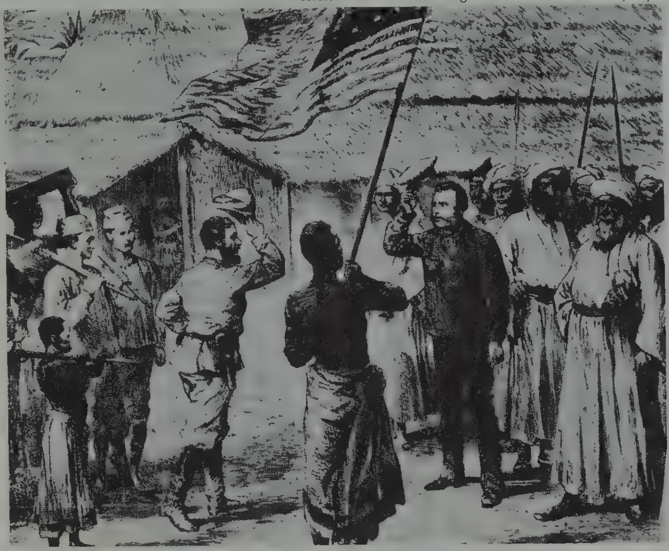
Livingstone saw a caravan moving toward him, an American flag at its head and a white man close behind. Recording the event in his journal, he wrote, "Bales of goods, baths of tin, huge kettles, cooking pots, tents, etc., made me think 'This must be a luxurious traveler, and not one at his wits' end like me.'" The leader of the caravan who came forward to greet him was a thirty-year-old reporter from the New York *Herald*, Henry M. Stanley, who had been sent out by his publisher, James Gordon Bennet, Jr., to find the doctor. The newspaper reporter had succeeded where the Royal Geographical Society and the British government had failed.

Stanley had lived a crowded and exciting life. Born a bastard in Wales and raised in a workhouse, he had as a boy run away to the United States, where, after clerking in a backwoods store in Arkansas, he served on both sides in the Civil War, deserted the United States Navy, and traveled in the still wild Far West. He had been shipwrecked off the coast of Spain and had served as a war correspondent during the British war in Abyssinia. He had been covering a revolution in Spain when he was summoned by his employer to Paris and given the assignment to find Livingstone.

When, after many hardships, he succeeded, he was apprehensive about the reception he would receive. Livingstone was a famous man; Stanley was an unknown reporter. As he came forward to greet the legendary explorer, his heart beat fast, and he was nervous and unsure of himself. "So I did that which I thought was most dignified," he wrote. "As I advanced slowly towards him I noticed that he was pale, looked wearied, had gray beard, wore a bluish cap with a faded gold band round it, had on a red-sleeved waistcoat, and a pair of gray tweed trousers. I would have run to him, only I was a coward in the presence of such a mob—would have embraced him, only, he being an Englishman, I did not know how he would receive me; so I did what cowardice and false pride suggested was the best thing—walked deliberately to him, took off my hat, and said: 'Dr. Livingstone, I presume?' "

Stanley did his best to convince Livingstone to return with him, but Livingstone refused; England and civilization held no attractions for him. He wanted passionately to find the source of the Nile, and now that he had the supplies that Stanley had brought him he was eager to continue his search. As soon as he was able to travel again, he and Stanley explored together the north end of Lake Tanganyika, and then Stanley reluctantly left. On reaching Zanzibar Stanley dispatched fifty-seven good bearers with more supplies, and when these arrived, Livingstone set off for unexplored territory. But there were to be no more important discoveries. Chronic illness dogged him, and he lost his way. In his notes he wrote: "I don't know where we are, and the people are deceitful in their statements. . . . Must plod on without guides." On April 10, 1873, he recorded that he was "pale, bloodless, and weak from bleeding profusely . . . an artery gives off a copious stream and takes away my strength." Nine days later he writes: "I am excessively weak . . . I can scarcely hold the pencil." On the twenty-seventh he is "knocked up quite. . . ." At last he could go on no longer, could not even bear to be carried. On May 1, 1873, at a place called simply Chitambo's village, on Lake Bangweulu, he died.

FROM *How I Found Livingstone* BY H. M. STANLEY, 1872



*In one of history's politest meetings the inhibited young newspaperman Henry Stanley, left, greets Livingstone, on November 3, 1871.*

His faithful followers Susi and Chuma then performed an incredible act of devotion. They removed Livingstone's heart and viscera and buried them beneath a tree on which they carved in deep letters the word LIVINGSTONE, followed by the date and some words in Swahili now partially obliterated. The body was embalmed after a fashion with rock salt and wrapped in calico, sailcloth, and bark and lashed to a carrying pole. Then Susi and Chuma kept the expedition together and carried Livingstone's remains and all of his papers and possessions back toward Zanzibar.

As the expedition neared the coast it encountered one of the Royal Geographical Society's search parties, this one commanded by Lieutenant Verney Lovett Cameron, R.N. At first Cameron found it hard to believe that the corpse was really Livingstone's, but on the desiccated body were the scars made by the lion. There could be no doubt. Had it not been for the protests of Susi and Chuma, Livingstone's corpse would have been buried at once, but the two faithful Africans succeeded in persuading the Englishmen to take it back with them to Zanzibar. His remains were then shipped to England, where with great pomp and ceremony they were buried at last beneath the floor of Westminster Abbey.

Livingstone failed in all of the things he wanted to accomplish: he did not succeed in converting the heathen, stopping the slave trade, or discovering the source of the Nile. He was an even greater failure in doing those things that most of us feel a man should and must do, such as taking care of his wife and children and repaying his debts. Yet he succeeded in proving that Central Africa could be explored, and his life and work inspired others to follow him into the African interior and to make more important discoveries than he had made. History has passed judgment and found him a great man, the terrible sufferings he voluntarily endured and the pain he knowingly inflicted on others justified. How fortunate he was to believe—as he did firmly and sincerely—that his own will was God's will.

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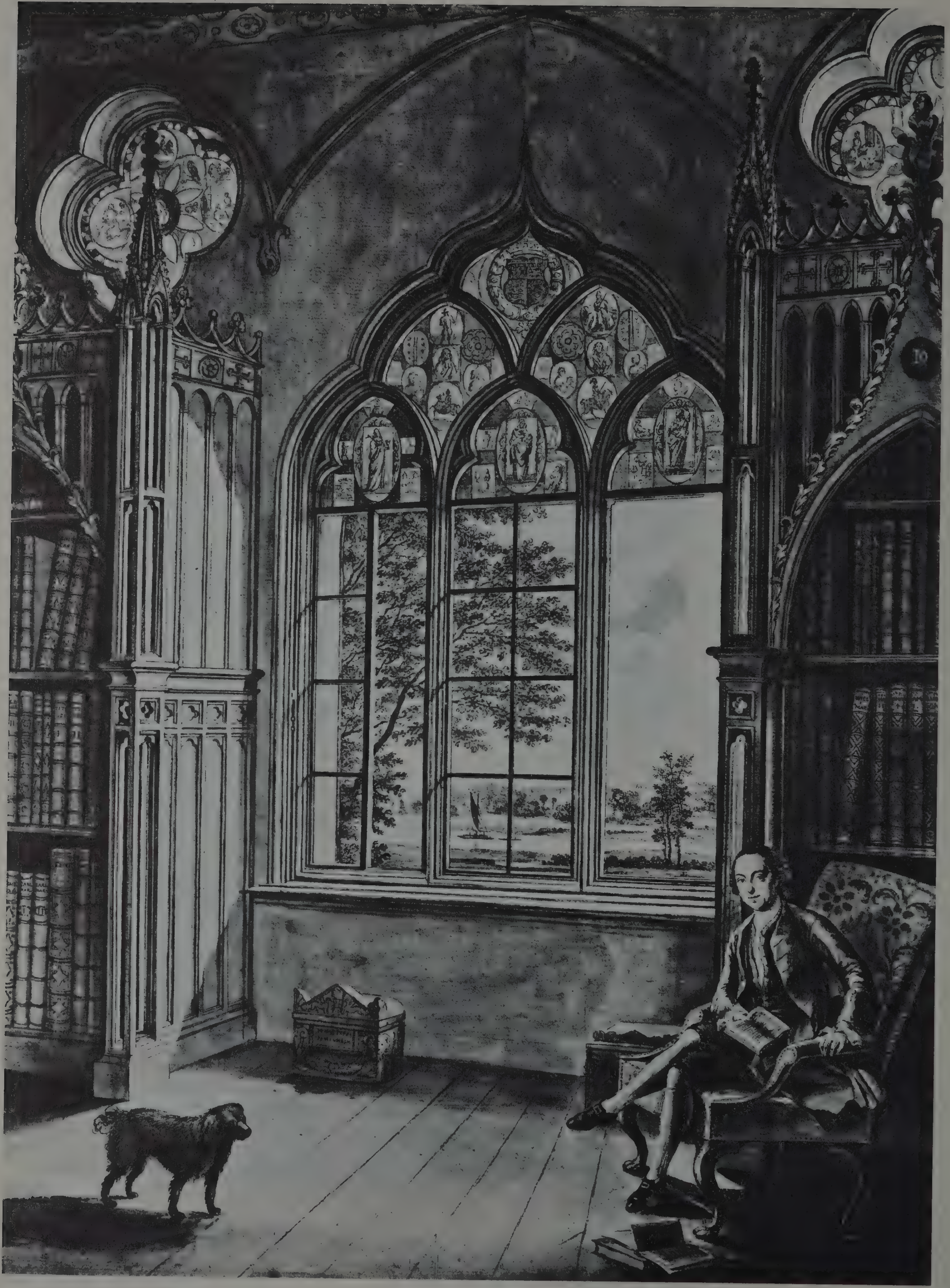
*Byron Farwell has written three books on Africa: biographies of Henry Morton Stanley and Richard Burton, and the more recent* Prisoners of the Mahdi.

COURTESY COMMANDER C. CAMPBELL-JOHNSTON, BRIGHTON



# The Moon Stood Still on Strawberry Hill

Through dark and fetid dungeon passages, past amorous phantoms and shrieking monks, the Gothic novel led its trembling readers to a creaking door. What lay behind? Some would say the subconscious of a century

In 1717 Alexander Pope, then only twenty-nine years old but already famous as the author of "The Rape of the Lock," "Windsor Forest," and "An Essay on Criticism," decided to issue his collected works. Among the contents of this splendid volume were two entirely new poems, both written during the course of the last twelve months, and both composed under the influence of a new and revolutionary mode of feeling. Although the poet was a keen classicist and a leader of the eighteenth-century Palladian school, he had chosen a Romantic, that is to say, a Gothic background, and sought to evoke a pervasive atmosphere of mystery, melancholy, and supernatural dread. In his "Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady" his heroine is a disembodied spirit whom he encounters wandering through a lonely garden:

> What beck'ning ghost, along the moonlight shade
> Invites my steps, and points to yonder glade?
> 'Tis she!—but why that bleeding bosom gored,
> Why dimly gleams the visionary sword?

In "Eloisa to Abelard," on the other hand, his passionate protagonists—the ill-used philosopher and the unhappy nun—are made of solid flesh and blood; but Pope's setting of the drama is strongly colored by his own fancy. Abelard himself had built the Paraclete, where after her lover's brutal castration, Eloisa was condemned to pass the remainder of her days. Pope surrounds it, nevertheless, with an air of grim antiquity and equips the convent with "moss-grown domes," "awful arches," and a ring of rugged mountains:

> The wandring streams that shine between the hills,
> The grots that echo to the tinkling rills . . .
> No more these scenes my meditation aid,
> Or lull to rest the visionary maid:
> But o'er the twilight groves and dusky caves,
> Long-sounding aisles and intermingled graves,
> Black Melancholy sits, and round her throws
> A death-like silence, and a dread repose:
> Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene,
> Shades every flower, and darkens every green,
> Deepens the murmur of the falling floods,
> And breathes a browner horror on the woods.

When he describes the effect of her miserable solitude upon his heroine's imagination, Pope might also be describing the advance of the Romantic Spirit across the English literary landscape. One of the chief functions of creative art is constantly to reinterpret nature; and henceforward the whole universe, seen through the eyes of poets and storytellers, began to undergo subtle change. Its colors deepened, and its shadows darkened. Mountains, hitherto regarded as exasperating natural obstacles, were now pregnant with ideas of "religion and poetry." Gothic ruins, formerly dismissed as so much architectural rubbish attractive only to the antiquarian, were voted "inexpressibly awful" and sublime. "Horrid" became a poetic key word, fear a favorite literary emotion. Every ancient building must have its ghost, just as every gentleman's park demanded a tame hermit.

A bizarre by-product of the Romantic Movement was the so-called Gothic novel, which, perhaps because it appealed to all that was most irrational in the human mind, retained its tremendous popular vogue right into the 1830's. Pope, a lover of Gothic architecture to the last, had died in 1744. In 1749 Horace Walpole bought a modest house beside the Thames and announced that he was refashioning it as "a little Gothick castle." For many years he continued to enlarge and embellish it, until Strawberry Hill, with its "pie-crust battlements" and pasteboard vaulting, developed into a marvelous architectural fantasy.

There, one night during the early summer of 1764, Walpole tells us that he was visited by a peculiarly impressive dream. At the time he was feeling gloomy and anxious. His handsome,

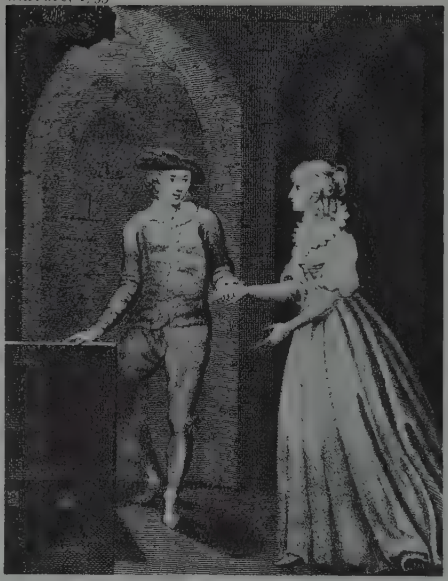
*Horace Walpole sits in the library of his "little Gothick castle," Strawberry Hill. Inside and out—even to the bookcases—it embodied his medieval fancy. Here he wrote* The Castle of Otranto *as well as the witty, elegant letters on which his real fame rests.*

*By* PETER QUENNELL

selfish cousin, Henry Seymour Conway, had recently fallen foul of court and government, and Walpole had been struggling to prepare his defense in the form of a bellicose political pamphlet. It was not an easy task; he was evidently overtired. And that night, he related, he had had a dream, "of which all I could recover was, that I had thought myself in an ancient castle . . . and that on the uppermost banister of a great staircase I saw a gigantic hand in armour. In the evening I sat down and began to write, without knowing in the least what I intended to say . . ."

For the next two months, as he covered sheet after sheet, he lived through a period of intense excitement, during which he deliberately cut himself off from all his usual friends and pastimes. Out of his trance emerged *The Castle of Otranto*, the only book of his, he assured his old confidante Madame du Deffand, in which he had taken any real pleasure. Published anonymously toward the end of 1764, it enjoyed an immediate popular success, and a second edition, with the author's name, appeared in April, 1765. To explain the impression it made on contemporary readers is nowadays a little difficult. Walpole's personages are all of them decorative dummies—a haughty tyrant, a brace of innocent maidens, a mysterious knight, and an unacknowledged heir. "Perhaps the dream-like inconsequence of the story," suggests Walpole's able biographer R. W. Ketton-Cremer, "constitutes its main charm . . ." It sprang from a dream, and retains something of the mysterious attraction that certain vivid dreams exert. Walpole's fantastic stage properties leave a particularly deep impression: a sighing portrait that steps from the canvas; the armored hand; a gigantic sculptural leg; and the prodigious helmet—"a hundred times more large than any casque ever made for human being, and shaded with a proportionable quantity of black feathers"—that crashes down into the castle courtyard.

WALPOLE, 1795



*In one turn of the plot the distressed heroine of* The Castle of Otranto *encounters a handsome stranger in the nether reaches of that edifice. "Be not alarmed, Lady," he says, of course, and takes her away from the castle and its wicked master, Prince Manfred.*

The symbolism of the tale and of its background seems to have been the product of Walpole's unconscious memory. Huge stone-built Otranto is an immensely magnified version of his own small and flimsy Thames-side house; and he also drew on his dormant recollections of a once familiar Cambridge college. Here Walpole was setting a pattern that many of the later Gothic novelists followed. They, too, drew up their images from the darkest recesses of their own subconscious; and they, too, would often write at breakneck speed, under the pressure of some violent secret emotion. Thus William Beckford's brilliant *Vathek* was a story, he declared, "so horrid that I tremble whilst relating it and have not a nerve in my frame but vibrates like an aspen."

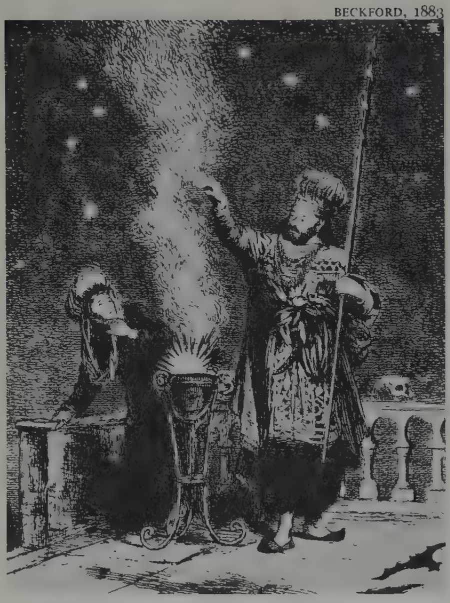
Beckford was Walpole's greatest successor, though for a Gothic setting he substituted the apparatus of a Middle Eastern fairy tale. During the 1770's a number of second-rate writers had done their best to produce a new *Otranto*. Beckford alone, a millionaire dilettante, showed the fiery touch of real genius. The English translation of *Vathek: An Arabian Tale*—Beckford's original French text had been written four years earlier—came out in 1786; and, like *Otranto*, it embodies a waking dream in which the dreamer gives a symbolic shape to his hidden passions and anxieties. Reading how Vathek, a restless seeker after truth whose occult researches include "even sciences that did not exist," leaves the Xanadu-like palace he has built on earth—it consists of five separate pavilions, "destined for the particular gratification of each of the senses"—and descends into the ghastly realm of Eblis, the "abode of vengeance and despair," we remember Beckford's own tragedy. At Fonthill he had constructed a private paradise, where, one fateful Christmas, he had spent a week of "delirium" in the company of a male and a female love. But he was soon to be hunted down by stern contemporary moralists, and in 1784 he was obliged to leave England under a heavy cloud of scandal.

Although the modern critic might have no difficulty in finding a psychological key either to *The Castle of Otranto* or to *Vathek*, he would be hard put to discover the secret problems and tensions that engendered *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. Mrs. Radcliffe was a blameless married woman, and apart from occasional attacks of asthma, led, so far as we can now judge, a happy, healthy, unadventurous life. But she was fond of foreign travel and fond of firelit musing, and in her books the places she had visited abroad assumed a wonderfully phantasmagoric character. The Castle of Udolpho incorporates her recollections of grim medieval castles on the Rhine:

> Towards the close of the day, the road wound into a deep valley. . . . The sun had just sunk below the top of the mountains . . . whose long shadow stretched athwart the valley; but his sloping rays . . . streamed in full splendor upon the towers and battlements of a castle that spread its extensive ramparts along the brow of a precipice above. . . . the whole edifice was invested with the solemn duskiness of evening. Silent, lonely, and sublime, it seemed to stand the sovereign of the scene . . .

The story itself is Mrs. Radcliffe's account of the drama that she felt might have been—or should have been—staged against such a melancholy and "awful" background. The first glimpse of the castle fascinated Sir Walter Scott, who went on to pronounce her narrative "the most interesting novel in the English language." What he particularly valued was her gift of creating suspense. Not until Mrs. Radcliffe's reader has traveled almost halfway through her second volume does her heroine, whose aunt had contracted an unfortunate marriage with a ruffianly Italian adventurer, sight the distant castle on its crag. But once arrived there, she becomes absorbed in the circumambient air of mystery and is exposed to a series of terrifying experiences that nearly undermine her reason. Montoni, Emily's gaoler and chief tormentor, is a dark, Byronic hero-villain. He determines to break his victim's spirit, but none of his deadly plans succeeds. Emily escapes from her long imprisonment after many strange vicissitudes, and at the end of Volume IV she is blissfully united with her chivalrous admirer, Valancourt.

When *The Mysteries of Udolpho* appeared in 1794, it had an enthusiastic welcome. It was one of those books that popular literary journalists claim they cannot put down, and despite its leisurely pace and remarkably involved plot, it is a novel that still deserves rereading. Again, its great charm is its strange, somnambulistic atmosphere. "To the warm imagination," wrote Mrs. Radcliffe, "the forms which float half-veiled in darkness afford a higher delight than the most distinct scenery the Sun can show." And at its best her narrative recalls the weird pictorial fantasies of Giambattista Piranesi and Salvator Rosa, where tiny human figures are seen painfully making their way through a perspective of tremendous rugged arches.


BECKFORD, 1883

*The caliph Vathek, William Beckford's exotic protagonist, consults the planets with the aid of his mother, who is versed in "judicial astrology." He learns that he must leave his pleasure palace and descend (like Beckford) into the "abode . . . of despair."*

For Coleridge and his fellow critics one of the book's attractions was its unexceptionable moral message. Virtue triumphs; every problem is solved; every occurrence that has inspired the heroine with a tremor of supernatural dread at length receives a natural explanation. Very different was the effect of *The Monk*, which Coleridge denounced as heartily as he had applauded Mrs. Radcliffe. If not the most original of the Gothic novelists, its author, Matthew Gregory Lewis, next to William Beckford, was unquestionably the oddest and the most arresting. Like Beckford, he derived his large inherited fortune from plantations in the West Indies. But, unlike the self-centered Beckford, he had a soft heart and an uneasy conscience. He was deeply perturbed by the miserable lot of his slaves and twice visited his Caribbean property to investigate the conditions under which they lived and worked. Indeed, his early death—born in 1775, he died in May, 1818—was a direct result of this benevolent enterprise. Yellow fever attacked him; he died on the journey home and was buried at sea. But the coffin that enclosed his body refused to sink, and part of the hammock that had been wrapped around it struggled loose and formed a sail. The sail was immediately caught by the trade wind, and from the deck his shipmates helplessly watched poor Lewis go bobbing back toward Jamaica.

When Byron heard the news—they were London acquaintances—he was deeply shocked and saddened. Lewis, he wrote, though at times a "damned bore," was also an excellent fellow, "a Jewel of a Man"; and most of the novelist's contemporaries would appear to have held the same opinion. In his writings, on the other hand, he showed a far less reassuring character. His imagination was dark, perverse, and sadistic—qualities that may have been due to the troubled circumstances of his youth and childhood. His father, a cold, pompous, dignified man, had separated, while Lewis was still young, from his gay, volatile, attractive wife. Lewis, of course, was his mother's darling, and he often attended her toilette to give expert advice about her clothes and jewels. Sometimes she took him with her to the theatre, where he learned to imitate, with "thrilling accuracy," a celebrated actress's shriek of horror.

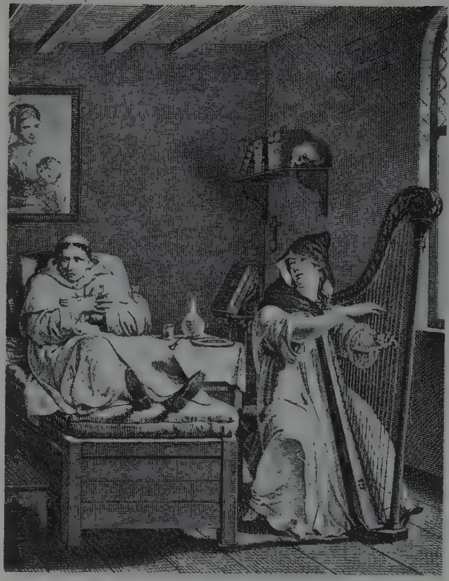
Physically, perhaps emotionally, Lewis somehow never quite grew up. Small and neat, with pallid, projecting eyes that reminded Sir Walter Scott of those of an insect, he always retained his fragile, boyish air. He was, moreover, so affectionate and high-strung that a single kind word—particularly if it fell from the lips of a royal duchess—might provoke a fit of nervous weeping. It was only once he had begun to write that he revealed his hidden nature, and then the wildest and most anarchic fancies would come tumbling out in uncontrolled profusion. The three volumes of his novel *The Monk*, written on a visit to Holland during the space of ten weeks, were published in March, 1796. The success they achieved was instantaneous. As "Monk" Lewis he became the lion of every fashionable London party; and to heighten his fame, a horde of self-righteous reviewers savagely attacked the novel, which they pronounced "impious," "libidinous," "poisonous," "corrupt," "obscene." If a parent saw *The Monk* "in the hands of a son or daughter," declared *The Critical Review*, "he might reasonably turn pale." Nor, for many years to come, did the story lose its gift of shocking. Even Byron, when he reread *The Monk* in 1813, was obliged to confess that he had been slightly startled: "These descriptions [he said] ought to have been written by Tiberius at Caprea—they are forced—the *philtered* ideas of a jaded voluptuary. It is to me inconceivable how they could have been composed by a man of only twenty . . . They have no nature—all the sour cream of cantharides."

The severity of Byron's criticism may nowadays strike us as a little far-fetched, but the surprise he felt is understandable. Although Lewis's private tendencies were believed to be ill-directed—Byron had heard reports of his successive "male-loves"—he was otherwise a fairly innocuous product of the English ruling classes. Whence sprang the lurid imaginings that gave *The Monk* its special quality? There is no doubt that he was inspired by Mrs. Radcliffe, but into the realms of Gothic romance he had brought a new, disturbing element. Lust and cruelty, death and dissolution, rape, matricide, incest, were the subjects of which "Monk" Lewis treated; and not content with being improper himself, he dared to suggest that certain parts of the Bible were just as unbecoming as his own productions. In the second volume of *The Monk* Elvira, "that prudent mother," is said to have decided that Holy Writ, without careful censorship, was quite unsuited to a pure young girl: "Many of the narratives can only tend to excite ideas the worst calculated for a female breast . . . and the annals of a brothel would scarcely furnish a greater choice of indecent expressions."

This passage gave extreme offense to the novelist's more high-minded readers, who, when they studied its immediate context, may well have thought that they heard the Devil preaching. For although *Monk* contains no "indecent expressions" and loudly advocates the cause of Virtue, it was Vice that really fascinated Lewis and brought out all his youthful artistry. The scene of the opening chapter is laid in Madrid at a venerable Capuchin church and a nearby Gothic monastery, where Ambrosio, the most famous preacher of Spain, dispenses consolation to a host of penitents. Ambrosio is an extraordinarily handsome man—"of noble port and commanding presence"—but so untouched by the sins of the flesh that his admirers like to believe that he cannot distinguish between male and female. In fact, his latent passions are just as strong as his professional vanity, and at the end of Chapter II he succumbs to the passionate advances of an adoring novice named Rosario. Luckily, Rosario proves to be a lovesick girl muffled up in monkish trappings, but Ambrosio's fall is none the less disastrous:

> Drunk with desire, he pressed his lips to those which sought them; his kisses vied with Matilda's in warmth and passion: he clasped her rapturously in his arms; he forgot his vows, his sanctity, and his fame; he remembered nothing but the pleasure and opportunity. "Ambrosio! Oh, my Ambrosio!" sighed Matilda. "Thine, ever thine," murmured the friar, and sunk upon her bosom.

LEWIS, 1807



*In this episode from Lewis's* The Monk, *Matilda serenades her adored Ambrosio, hoping to tempt him to succumb to his baser desires. Alas, he succumbs, though he "struggled with desire, and shuddered when he beheld how deep was the precipice before him."*

There the curtain abruptly rings down, and Lewis, another master of suspense, plunges into the ramifications of an elaborate subplot. The curtain does not rise again to discover Ambrosio and the false Rosario until the start of Chapter VI, after we have been whirled around Middle Europe through a succession of wild and ghostly episodes, have escaped from a romantic robbers' den and encountered the Bleeding Nun, an especially appalling specter. But before long "the licentious monk" begins to tire of his lascivious mistress. Now and then he still "rages with desire," but Matilda's hold is slowly weakening. The bold young woman continues to tempt him to sin, "but she soon was aware that she had satiated her lover by the unbounded freedom of her caresses. . . . The delirium of passion being past, he had leisure to observe every trifling defect; where none were to be found, satiety made him fancy them." Meanwhile, "the overwhelming torrent of his desire," which Matilda had so unwisely unleashed, is surging toward a new objective.

At this point the wretched Matilda chooses to accept her *congé*. But if she cannot be Ambrosio's bedfellow, she can at least be his accomplice; and having invoked the powers of the underworld and got the satanic hierarchy on her side, she proceeds to abet him in his loathsome schemes for ruining a beautiful and helpless virgin. She does more; she actually whets his lust by showing him, with the help of a magic mirror, the reflection of "the enchanting girl" at a particularly unguarded moment:

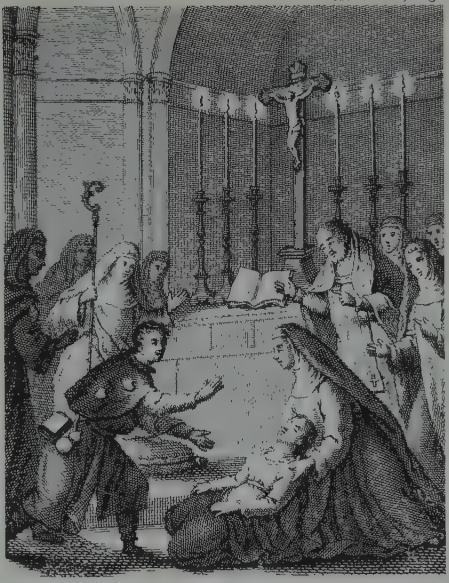
> She threw off her last garment, and, advancing to the bath . . . put her foot into the water. It struck cold, and she drew it back again. Though unconscious of being

> observed, an in-bred sense of modesty induced her to veil her charms; and she stood hesitating upon the brink, in the attitude of the Venus de Medicis. At this moment, a tame linnet flew towards her, nestled its head between her breasts, and nibbled them in wanton play. The smiling Antonia . . . at length raised her hands to drive it from its delightful harbour. Ambrosio could bear no more. . . . "I yield!" he cried, dashing the mirror upon the ground: "Matilda, I follow you! Do with me what you will!"

Such is one of the descriptions that came very near to shocking Byron; and there are other equally voluptuous incidents in the author's third volume, where we read how Ambrosio, after various setbacks, manages to rape Antonia, only to learn that they are both the children of Elvira, whom, because she surprised him in the midst of his criminal efforts, he has meanwhile done to death. Thus incest is neatly coupled with matricide, and it remains for the Evil One to make a terrific appearance and preside over the grand finale.

"Monk" Lewis was an enthusiastic, rather than a gifted writer. As quotations may have already shown, he had an extremely banal prose style, but it is often redeemed by the tremendous verve and energy that he puts into the conduct of his headlong narrative. The pace is unflagging, like that of the runaway horses he describes in Volume II, which "dragged the carriage through hedges and ditches, dashed down the most dangerous precipices, and seemed to vie in swiftness with the rapidity of the winds" before they finally upset the vehicle. His phantoms themselves are apt to be unconscionably loud and boisterous. And when the Bleeding Nun appears at her victim's bedside, "the most dreadful confusion," we are told, "reigned through the castle. The vaulted chambers resounded with shrieks and groans; and the spectre, as she raged along the antique galleries, uttered an incoherent mixture of prayers and blasphemies. Otto was unable to withstand the shock . . ."

RADCLIFFE, 1836



*Mrs. Radcliffe's* The Italian: Or the Confessional of the Black Penitents *had both ecclesiastical and "horrid" trappings and enjoyed a great success. Here the heroine swoons at an altar upon catching a glimpse of her lover, who has returned from a pilgrimage.*

Lewis's romance, in short, is the climax, or *reductio ad absurdum*, of the eighteenth-century Gothic novel. From *The Castle of Otranto* he took its antique architectural background; from *Vathek*, its spirit of wild impiety; from *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, its dungeons and chains and shadows and darkly sweeping mountain landscapes. But none of his predecessors had dared to go so far. Alongside his elaborate pictures of lust and license he places innumerable images of decay and death. Here he outdoes the Elizabethan poets. Shakespeare himself, in *Romeo and Juliet*, shows a greedy appetite for horrors; but Juliet, immured in the tomb of the Capulets, has an easy fate compared with Lewis's Antonia, who is eventually ravished by the infamous monk near "three putrid half-corrupted bodies."

This was not, however, the end of the Gothic novel; at the beginning of the next century the form was still so widely popular that Jane Austen gave us her famous dialogue between two impressionable young novel addicts, Catherine Morland, the heroine of *Northanger Abbey*, and her beloved companion Isabella Thorpe. Isabella has just lent her friend a copy of Mrs. Radcliffe's masterpiece:

> " . . . and when you have finished Udolpho, we will read the Italian together; and I have made out a list of ten or twelve more of the same kind for you."
>
> "Have you, indeed! How glad I am! What are they all?"
>
> "I will read you their names directly; here they are in my pocket-book: Castle of Wolfenbach, Clermont, Mysterious Warnings, Necromancer of the Black Forest, Midnight Bell, Orphan of the Rhine, and Horrid Mysteries. Those will last us some time."
>
> "Yes; pretty well; but are they all horrid? Are you sure they are all horrid?"

Nor was the vogue now confined to foolish young women who frequented the Bath circulating library. Before 1811 Shelley had written two romances, *Zastrozzi* and *St. Irvyne*, of the most extravagantly Gothic type; Mary Shelley, in 1818, produced *Frankenstein*, a far more interesting and original story; and in 1819 Dr. John Polidori, Byron's private traveling physician, endeavored to take the literary world by storm with his necrophilic tale *The Vampyre*. *Melmoth the Wanderer*, the work of an Irish clergyman, Charles Robert Maturin, from whom Oscar Wilde claimed descent, was published in the year 1820; and Thomas De Quincey wrote *The Avenger* as late as 1838. Thus the Gothic novel lingered on, like some aged saurian that had managed to survive the heyday of the giant reptiles, while all around it the climate was slowly changing. The year 1836 had seen the emergence of a great new literary star; *Pickwick Papers* was soon followed by *Oliver Twist* and *Nicholas Nickleby*. A new spirit of Cockney realism had begun to illuminate the English novel, and as it gained brilliance, the specters of Gothic fancy flickered and paled and dissolved, at last, into broad Victorian daylight.

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*Peter Quennell's most recent article for* HORIZON *was "Crusoe's Island" (Spring, 1967). He is coeditor of* History Today.

# Do-it-yourself Gothic —A Few Ideas for the Back Yard

PHOTOGRAPHS BY EDWIN SMITH

*Horton's Tower, a seven-story folly built by a Mr. Sturt in Dorset*

The eighteenth-century quest for the shudders went well beyond the craving for "horrid" novels and took the form of horrid architecture as well. The Gothic revival style was, of course, a serious approach to building, but close on its heels followed a flock of bogus follies in stone. Every fashionable gentleman wanted one for his estate—a grotto encrusted with shells, a made-to-measure ruin, a haunted castle, a keep. A hermit's abode—with hermit—behind the manor house could be as impressive a selling point as a flagstone patio is today. Few men had the resources and taste of Horace Walpole, who bought the villa called Strawberry Hill and spent years and a fortune transforming it to suit his Gothic taste. Almost no one was lucky enough to have a real medieval ruin on the family property, so a number of entrepreneurs set about building their own. Some illustrated books of instruction for the Gothicizer even found their way into print: Batty Langley's *Gothic Architecture Improved by Rules* was one ("I therefore give this public notice that it will take to erect all sorts of buildings in the Saxon mode . . . no greater expence than a plain building . . ."). Another was Charles Over's book on the "Gothic, Chinese, and Modern Taste," four plans from which appear opposite at right. The follies in the photographs are all to be seen today among the scores that eccentrically dot the English landscape.

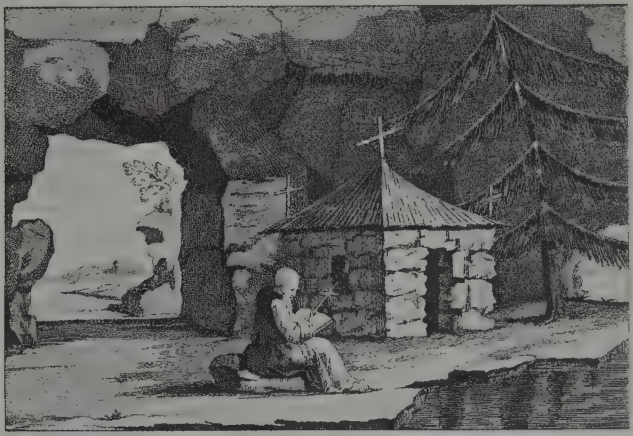
*Walpole's Strawberry Hill, the most magnificent foll*

A Gothic "temple" at Stowe in Buckinghamshire

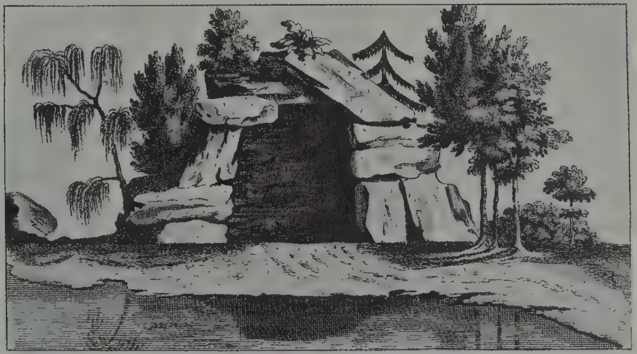
The earliest sham grotto, built for Alexander Pope at Twickenham

of them all, now a Catholic girls' school

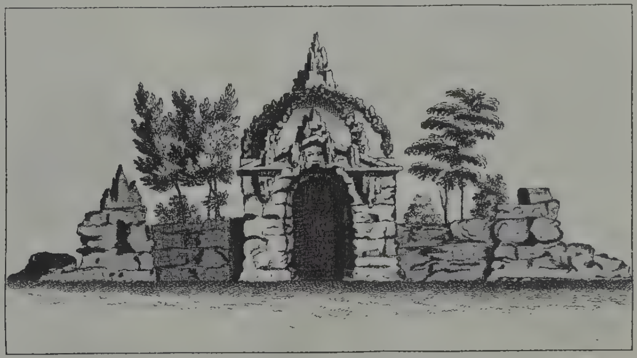
## Plans for Four Ruins from Over's *Ornamental Architecture in the Gothic, Chinese, and Modern Taste,* 1758



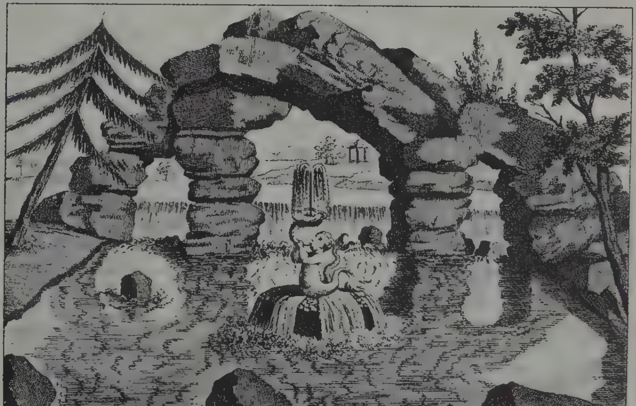
*"A Hermit's Cell to be raifed not more than fix Feet, and placed in fome large Cavern . . . Regard should be had to Propriety, that the . . . Labour may feem the probable work of the inhabitant. . . "*



*"A rustic covered Seat, compofed of large Stones geometrically fixed and cemented for Security, and the Interftices clofely filled with Mofs, and being placed in a Valley or Wildernefs. . . "*



*"A Grotto which may be executed with fmall Expence"*



*"A Cafcade which may be eafily effected in Gardens"*

# This Earth, This Realm, This Plastic Finnan Haddie

*Not long ago the young British satirist and novelist Michael Frayn (the author of* A Very Private Life, The Tin Men, *and* Against Entropy*) made a tour of America to get a close-to, Tocquevillian view of the New World. What surprised him most was the manner in which Americans, at a distance of several thousand miles, viewed his native land. So that our readers will know what the English think of what the Americans think of how the English think and act, we present here the thoughtful report Mr. Frayn sent back to his countrymen at the end of his visit.*

I'm not sure that I ever did find the *real* America, or the *real* Americans, that the unreal Americans I met in the unreal America were always so anxious I should see. I hurried from place to place, but at the end of the rainbow all I ever found were more unreal Americans—people rather like oneself—who had it on good authority that the real America was 374 miles up the road.

Some of these unreal Americans were so much like real Englishmen that communication became rather a problem. I'd speak to them in plain enough American—"cookies," "candy," "riding the subway," and all the rest of it (or rather a dialect of it, which goes something like "biscImeancookies," or "sweetsorIshouldsaycandy")—and they'd come back at me with a lot of stuff about "petrol" and "lifts," or at any rate "gasserpetrol" and "elevatorasyousaylift."

"Jeez, baby," I'd cry in the vernacular, "if that ain't just the darndest thing I ever heard, man, and that's for sure, kiddo, by golly gosh."

Well, they'd just stare at me. "Oh, I say, what?" they'd murmur uneasily. "Steady on, old chap, by George, and all that." Sounded as if they'd got a plum in their mouth, some of them.

Still, the trip wasn't wasted. I've found out a lot about the real *England* while I've been over here—found out all sorts of things about the country I never knew, largely by reading the advertisements in the American press.

We're awfully smartly dressed in England, one can't help noticing for a start. We have a certain "British flair and swagger" that shows in the "sturdy corduroy trench coats" our men wear. And in our berets, of course—"quite properly British," as the importers explain, particularly when worn with a half-smoked Gauloise and a string of onions.

Indeed, Englishmen are scarcely ever out of rainwear of one sort or another, as I understand it. Not surprising, really; everyone here knows it rains continuously in England. Well, not in *London*, naturally, since London is wrapped perpetually in London fog.

We take off our raincoats sometimes, of course—and reveal scarlet waistcoats, like the ones that are stocked in the English boutiques in New York City. Or else we stand rather correctly about after the day's shooting with our left hands in our pockets, sipping Scotch and wearing military mustaches, loud green-checked suits, and Onyx for Men, "the bracing, buoyant scent that Englishmen created for Englishmen."

Exactly who pours the Scotch I'm not too sure; about once a week I read in various American papers that it's becoming very difficult to get real English butlers in England. This must make life rather hard—we're notable drinkers, with about five thousand different brands of Scotch to choose from, each of which we enjoy with more quiet, reflective, British pleasure than all the rest. A good butler is a simple necessity of life in these conditions.

We're notable eaters as well as notable drinkers. In fact, eating and drinking are just about the only activities we *have* been noted performing, and we seem to carry on with them, bravely undeterred by the sight of each other's scarlet waistcoats, green-checked suits, and bracing, buoyant smell.

We start the day off with a traditional breakfast of English muffins ("a British and grape jelly, Jeeves," as those of us lucky enough to retain our butlers murmur aristocratically through our mustaches). Our traditional food on most other occasions, if Keen's English Chop House in New York has got it right, is roast beef and Yorkshire popover.

The British Travel Association on Fifth Avenue, however, disputes the narrowness of this diet. It has devoted a whole window display to our eating habits, in the hope of persuading Americans to come over and observe them from close to. According to British Travel we eat plastic—plastic finnan haddie, plastic kidneys, plastic cockles and mussels, plastic haggis, plastic strawberries in plastic cream, and many other plastic delicacies.

Eat like a native and drink like a fish in a typical English pub. I'd almost forgotten just what a typical English pub was like, I must admit, until I saw some of the typical English pubs that have sprung up all over New York in the last few years.

Anyway, that's England, when you really get it into focus. One slight drawback—there don't seem to be any women there. A great imperial destiny, I think one can deduce, reading between the lines; a sound currency; a magnificent ability to hold our liquor. But no women.

I am hastening back to investigate.

*By* MICHAEL FRAYN

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